



SIX

DISCOURSES, &c.

By PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.





224 f 22

S I X
DISCOURSES;

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A N

INTRODUCTION;

CONTAINING

A View of the GENUINE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY;
of the natural, and effectual Tendency of that
PHILOSOPHY, and of CHRISTIAN MORALITY,
to all TRUE PROSPERITY in *this* World;

AND SOME

OBSERVATIONS

On a Book lately published, entitled,

A VIEW OF THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE
OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

BY

PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

Ου πόλοι καὶ κωμοί, οὐδ' ἀπολαύσεις γυναικῶν, οὐδ' ἰχθυῶν, καὶ
τῶν ἄλλων ὅσα φέρει πολυτέλης τραπέζα, τὸν ἥδυν γεννᾷ βίον,
ἀλλὰ νηφῶν λογισμὸς, καὶ τὰς αἰτίας ἐξερευνῶν πάσης αἰρέσεως,
καὶ φύγης, καὶ τὰς δοξὰς ἐξελαυνῶν, ἀφ' ὧν πλεῖστος τὰς
ψυχὰς κατὰ λαμβάνει δορυβός. Epicurus; apud Diog. Laert.
de vit. Philosoph. Lib. X.

L O N D O N,

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in Fleet Street.

M D C C L X X V I I .

DISCOURSES

INTRODUCTION

A series of Discourses delivered at the
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T O

The Right Reverend

D R. S H I P L E Y,

Lord Bishop of St. Asaph.

MY LORD,

AS the following pages contain my sentiments on moral, and theological subjects ; and as I am a clergyman, it gives me pleasure that I can yet find one bishop, to whom I can address a Dedication ; to whom I can give large praise, without flattery ;—whose talents I esteem, whose

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humanity I love, and whose independent spirit I admire.

I may, without vanity, and without seeming to imply an unreserved, and general comparison, observe, that the man who now addresses you, is endowed with his laudable singularities as well as your Lordship. His heart inspires what his head forms, while he pays you this publick homage; a rare sympathy, when an authour dedicates his productions to a superiour.—I request your perusal of these Discourses without entertaining the least hope of your Lordship's patronage;—another instance of my originality in writing a Dedication:—and to raise, and compleat my climax; from diffusing, and enforcing, with my best abilities, the most important religious, and civil truths, at a time very alarming to the church, and to the
the

DEDICATION. vii

the state, I am not restrained, either by the dread of power, or of want.

This assertion of my disinterested, and determined spirit, as a citizen of our English commonwealth, a generous publick will immediately acknowledge, and warmly ratify, when they find it's truth evinced, by this book, and by my dependent situation.

I am,

My Lord,

with great respect, and esteem,

Your Lordship's

most obedient servant,

PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

Portsmouth,
Jan. 29th, 1777.

PERICATON

the fact, I am not prepared to
by the time of your next visit

This letter is of an unimportant
and contains nothing of a serious
our English correspondence is a
your public and private life, and
knowledge, and warmly thank you
they and it will be a great
book, and I am dependent on
you.

I am,

My Love,

with great respect and esteem,

Your affectionate

most obedient servant,

THEO. W. STOCKDALE

London
Jan 20 1835

INTRODUCTION.

THEY who favour the following discourses with a perusal, will not think this introduction superfluous, which obviates an objection or two that may be urged against their most important principles and arguments.

Ever since I was capable of exerting reason; ever since I was conversant with the writers of Greece and Rome; from all that I could think, and from all that I could collect; it has been my fixed opinion, that the precepts of the gospel form a system for the conduct of human life essentially the same with the morality of the most celebrated ancient philosophers.

This view of human and divine ethicks was so far from weakening, that it strengthened my belief in Christianity. I was happy

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to find that the immediate revelation of the will of God coincided with the doctrine of those virtuous and sublime sages who possessed the purest and strongest reason; that original and sacred guide, which in all civil and religious matters determines the assent or opposition, the belief or disbelief, of every man who dares to be honest, and to be free.

It appears from the writings of one very respectable and eminent author, that he thinks exactly with me of the excellence, of the perfection, of ancient morality. I mean the author of *Hermes*; that complete and elegant scholar, that fine reasoner, that sentimental and elevated philosopher, whose works do great honour to English literature, and severely reproach our men of independent fortune for the wretched misapplication of their time. If that gentleman should read this introduction, I beg that he would accept my mite of praise, not as an encomium which I thought would give him any consequence; but as the warm tribute of a heart that glows with gratitude for the noble pleasure which his books have afforded me.

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My studies are broken and desultory, like my life. To corroborate my opinion, let me therefore appeal to a book which is fresh in my memory, and incorporated with my sentiments. If the accurate and unprejudiced reader will carefully peruse the Tusculan questions of Cicero, he will find that their moral eloquence, which comprizes an epitome of the ethicks of the best old schools, would serve as well for a commentary on the Gospel. It may be objected to that beautiful and animated compendium of the most interesting truths, that the Wise-man of the author is unexceptionable; complete in virtue; superior to the soft allurements of pleasure, and to the cruellest persecution of pain. But this objection would be precipitate, not just. Does not the life of Christ exhibit a perfect moral character? and is not he proposed in the New Testament, and by all evangelical instructors, as the model for our imitation? The ancient philosophers, as well as our Saviour and his apostles, knew that in their most generous disciples there would always remain some infirmity, some vice; and that their moral course was to be held as direct as possible. Hence they illustrated and en-

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forced their precepts and arguments with a bright example ; harmonious in all its parts ; uniformly good and great ; an example which their followers were to imitate ; which they were to endeavour to emulate : —an example, which, as it did not authorize any deviation from rectitude of manners, would keep them intent and vigilant on the culture of the mind ; and, as it was dignified and graced with all the majesty and attraction of virtue, would stimulate them to perform the most disinterested and heroic actions. Much grave censure and much pert irony have been thrown out on stoical rant and stoical apathy, by those who had not learning enough to know, understanding enough to comprehend, or sentiment enough to feel, that divine philosophy. It has likewise been objected to the heathen authors, that they never could agree in a moral system ; and that their several theories are extremely defective and inconsistent. This has been asserted by theological pedants ; and echoed by their superficial pupils ever since literature was diffused over Europe. And to this objection I answer, that in Old Greece and Rome, as in other countries, men of poor talents and cavilling tempers

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tempers pretended to explain and inculcate ethics; — that writers of mean abilities and intemperate warmth will always rather weaken than promote the best cause; that Christianity itself is often dishonoured and injured by the absurdity of its presumptuous defenders, and by their zeal without knowledge; and that the moral obligations proposed by the true sages and great authors of antiquity—by a Socrates, a Cicero, an Epictetus, and an Aurelius, were virtually the same. The capital ancient philosophers were explicit and full on our practical duties; and we must not attribute their doubts and disputes on those delicate and incomprehensible subjects, which, ever since they flourished, have been controverted and agitated by metaphysical inquiry, to *their* particular inconsistency, or want of acute and comprehensive intellect; but to the limitations with which the Creator hath circumscribed the human mind. Must not they have been as naturally and necessarily undetermined as the moderns, on the immortality of the soul, on the origin of moral sentiment, and the criterion of moral truth?

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I thus give my sentiments, and almost my conviction, to the public, without reserve, because I am satisfied by my best judgment, that the ability of man to ascertain, and practise all his duties, does not supersede the great advantages of the Christian Institution. To every good mind; to every mind that sincerely and ardently wishes to form a habitude of virtue and piety; the oracles of religion will dignify and evince the collateral dictates of reason with an awful sanction, with an irrefragable demonstration. And as life teems with calamity, how gloriously is the gloom of life penetrated and illuminated by the assurance which the gospel gives us of a future and eternal state; an assurance which could never be established on the mere principles of human reason? Here then we know what is right from the highest authority; and the promises of that omnipotent authority encourage us to act according to what we know.—Even the virtuous man, who enjoys all the good things of this world; all the conveniences, all the refinements of art; all the consequence, all the information, all the entertainment, that we receive from society; whose liberty is without controul; who has the power to gratify

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gratify every reasonable desire as soon as it is formed : even this man, though he must be as happy as a mortal *can* be here below, will often reflect on the vanity of transitory possession ; and will often anticipate a future existence with unspeakable delight. But if we reverse this bright scene ; if we view a person of a susceptible, elegant, and benevolent soul ; whom a slow malady consumes, and whom the iron hand of penury makes a prisoner, and a slave ; who is every day galled with *the stings, and arrows of outrageous fortune* ; and whose frequent relief is, to drop a tear in solitude, and to look up to heaven with an eye of modest appeal, yet conscious that it merits a better fate ; what a merciful solace, what a thrilling pleasure, must the certain prospect of a future existence afford to this person, so excellent, yet thus afflicted, and thus depressed ! To say with Pope, *whatever is, is right*, without taking the immortality of the soul into the moral œconomy of God, is the greatest impiety to the Supreme Being ; and the most absurd, barbarous, and exasperating inhumanity with which the *good Distressed, the noble-minded Few*, were ever insulted.

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But I offer not my opinion, of the purity, of the perfection of heathen morality, without a proper deference to those great men, both of the church and laity, whose judgement on this point is totally different from mine; who think the least exceptionable system of Greek or Roman ethicks far inferior to the code of the gospel. Rousseau, too, in that part of his *Emilius* where he bestows a large and animated encomium on the precepts of Christ, pronounces the best of the ancient philosophers, in their theory of moral duties, deficient, selfish, often at variance with each other; and often inconsistent with themselves; and I beg leave to assure his admirers, whom I must always esteem, that, with sincere diffidence and humility, I acknowledge *my* comparative view of Christianity, and uninspired Philosophy, to be quite incompatible with that of my great and revered master in learning, as in imagination; that first luminary of genius, before whom all his contemporary intellectual stars *hide their diminished heads*,

The reader will find that in these discourses, I have expatiated on an article of my religious belief, which will be less disputed than the opinion I have now advanced.

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That the means by which we are to secure eternal bliss, are most favourable to our interest, and yield us most pleasure in our temporary state, is one of my fixed, and invariable tenets; and in this tenet I am supported by the most liberal and enlightened writers on Ethicks and Divinity. I will not, for many reasons, assert, that the most virtuous are always the most happy. Few moral propositions hold universally. Nor will I assert that virtue naturally brings a spring-tide of prosperity; the gold of Peru, and the gems of Golconda;—but of this I am demonstratively convinced, that moral rectitude, or a practical observance of the laws of Christianity, procures us, far more generally than any other mode of conduct, not only all the necessaries, but likewise the conveniencies and elegances of life in that degree, which, as human nature is affected by externals, is most conducive to human happiness. We are told by the doating Monk and Hermit, that we are to obtain heaven by making ourselves miserable on earth; by a total neglect of domestic and public duties; by solitude, and gloom, and mortification; by a cruel, inflexible, and impious war with nature. But genuine sentiment; and reason, and Christianity, by which they
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are confirmed, hold a very different language: they tell us that the life which is approved by God, is an active, and a generous life; that if we would merit his favour here, and in a better world, we must direct and exert our understanding, our talents, our passions, for the *good* of society; by which conduct we promote and secure *our own*;—that religion is not crowned with cypress and with ivy, but with laurel and with roses;—that the chearfulness, the gaiety, the mirth of a Christian are a most acceptable species of gratitude to his Creator; and that, when the virtuous man leaves earth for heaven, he ascends from an inferior to a higher degree of happiness;—but that both are congenial, and that the one is naturally preparative to the other. This doctrine is worthy of the Supreme Being; not that incongruity between piety and pleasure which is denounced by gloomy visionaries, and designing priests;—this doctrine is worthy of that Being, who, as his mercy is over all his works, could never allot melancholy and pain for the destiny of the good. It is worthy of a Being infinitely benevolent, wise, and powerful;—of a Being who certainly gives as fair a government to his moral,

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moral, as he gives to his physical creation; which we see strongly characterized with harmonious, beautiful progression; similar, unbroken series; intimate connexion.

Before I conclude this introduction, I shall make some observations on a late publication, entitled, "A View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion." I should wish to remove some gross errors, dishonourable to Christianity, which it may have impressed on very ingenuous minds who had not been habituated to read, and to reflect. This is my only motive for designing to animadvert on a book, which, of itself, is so miserable a performance, that it deserves not, on its own account, a more active notice than silent contempt. Some suffrages, however, very trivial, and despicable to those who have sense and spirit enough to think and judge for themselves, but very decisive with our human apes and parrots, have procured it a temporary fame, and consequently a temporary importance.

Mr. Jenyns, in his treatise on the Christian Religion, has been industrious to exemplify a text in Scripture which warns us, that "The letter [of the New Testament] killeth;

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“ killeth ; but the spirit giveth life *.” — As the gospel should operate on our minds, according to his theory ; “ we are to eradicate every generous and elevated sentiment ; our souls are to be destitute of love, of friendship, of patriotism, of valour, of ambition ; ” — for even the mild and humane Christian ought to keep alive in his breast, ought to raise the flame of ambition, while it stimulates him to virtuous and noble enterprize. In short, according to Mr. Je-nyns’s theory, the animated man, by an impious transformation, is to be metamorphosed into the driveling methodist.

This abject picture of Christianity he has drawn, and exhibited to the public, from a strain of egregious folly, or disingenuous and pitiful sophistry, which it is difficult to conceive how an author, who was not insane, could, or durst, commit in this enlightened age ; — by interpreting the New Testament literally ; by not allowing for what the most learned and judicious Commentators, for what all readers who are endowed with sound and common sense largely and properly allow ; for the boldness of oriental metaphor, and orien-

* 2 Cor. iii. 5.

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tal hyperbole; for the strong barriers with which the sacred writers have wisely restrained the selfish partiality, and the violent passions of mankind. If those who read, should adopt the microscopical mind of a Jenyns, those who write must not merely shrivel to logical coldness, but to mathematical rigour. Adieu, then, to all that sentiment and energy in composition, and to all that colouring of style, which warm the heart, and exalt the spirit! Adieu to eloquence, to elegance, to ardour;—to the beautiful and the sublime!

I shall here give the reader the substance of two propositions contained in his treatise. The one will shew his talents as a reasoner; the other, as an explainer of Scripture.

He says, we must believe the rigorous doctrine of the Trinity, unless we reject evangelical authority. And he acknowledges, that this belief of the Trinity is contradictory to reason. But he insists, that it is not more contradictory to reason than our belief of a Supreme Being. For, he adds, if we believe the existence of a God, we believe the existence of an effect without a cause.

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A novice in metaphysics would hardly have hazarded this proposition. — Every effect which exists, must have been effected, or produced in time, in some juncture or part of time. But God hath existed eternally; therefore God was never effected, or produced; of him there was no cause; and his existence is totally dissimilar from the existence of an effect. Therefore the existence of a God is by no means contradictory to reason, though it is incomprehensible by reason.

He says, it was in the scheme of providence, that, through all the ages of Christianity, the genuine practical Christians were to consist but of a few, who should have self-denial enough to live in all that austerity and apathy which he obtrudes on our excellent religion. This assertion he has attempted to corroborate by a text of our Saviour, misunderstood and misapplied. He had forgotten many other passages of Scripture, which declare the reverse of what he here endeavours to establish. But what, Mr. Jenyns, will become of that exceeding great number, who will be found, at the day of judgment, to have been disobedient to the laws of Christianity, as they are

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are announced by you*?—As you are a literal, a rigid interpreter of Scripture; if you are consistent with yourself, and ingenuous, you will be ready to own, that *they must burn in hell for ever.*

But though his book is fraught with absurdities, it contains none greater than his ignorant or perverse misrepresentation of those two exalted virtues, friendship and patriotism. According to his definition of them, they are selfish and detestable habits; and, according to his definition of them, they are most undoubtedly prohibited by Christ; nor are they recommended by any authour, whose testimony is respectfully quoted in the moral world. Friendship he describes as an undistinguishing, partial, contracted affection; which confines all our good offices to the single person, whom we blindly and extravagantly prefer to every other object. But this is not the nature and the consequence of friendship; I mean, of virtuous friendship: for I am so far from allowing, that friendship and patriotism are inconsistent with the purest virtue, that

* “ Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that
“ leadeth to life; and few there be that find it.” Matth.
vii. 14.

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I am convinced, the nearer a man arrives to the attainment of the purest virtue, the better he is qualified to discharge the duties of the true friend, and the true patriot. One individual hath long known, and conversed much with another, ever since their early youth; when the mind is open, and ardent, and when life is in the bloom of pleasure. Between their studies and their tastes in general there is a great congeniality; between their tempers, inclinations, and habits, there is no abrupt and harsh difference; none but what gives an agreeable motion and vivacity to their communication; spirit and expression to their amicable harmony. Their friendship is confirmed and dignified by their mutual proofs of honour and generosity. Now, will any one presume to assert, that these two friends, by entertaining the highest affection and esteem for each-other, act against the laws of the Christian religion, and the welfare of society? None will assert this, but he who has made of all Christian morality such morality *as never entered into the mind of man*. And as I am still supposing that virtue is the principle and the guide of their friendship, I will add, that *one virtuous man cannot be*
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better employed than in promoting the interest, and happiness of *another*; and that it is impossible for him to promote them to excess. I may safely advance farther, and maintain, that though our friends may reasonably be more attached to one another than to any person upon earth, yet their connexion by no means prevents them from doing good offices to their relations, to their acquaintance, and to mankind, in proportion to the different claims on their humanity—that there is nothing in the nature of their intimacy which restrains them from relieving even their enemies in distress. Nay, friendship, and love, and all the noble passions, operate on human nature with a genial, and benign influence: they open and expand our generous propensities, to the Great, and the Unbounded: they make large amends for attracting, and absorbing the mind; and give it back to the world in a warmer, and more active emanation of universal benevolence. My vindication of common sense, and common knowledge grows tedious to myself, and I fear it will fatigue the liberal reader. There are times, when candour is pusillanimity, and when resentment is virtue. How callous must the wretch be to our best feelings,

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ings, or how impiously must he suppress them, who, to indulge the vanity of the literary fop in a new tinsel of antithesis, offers a wanton indignity to the sacred shrine of friendship!

We are providentially, and wisely so constituted by the Authour of our nature, that we are most forcibly attached to the region of our birth, by our domestick, and social connexions. But if mankind could possibly adopt into practice that theory of universal benevolence which is proposed by Mr. Jenyns, all those pleasures which are the most powerful charms of life, would cease; those pleasures which result from our esteem, and affection for our friends, acquaintance, and countrymen; from conversing with them, and giving them our protection, or assistance; the kind and beneficent warmth of social sentiment would be extinguished, and our souls would be chilled with a cold sense of unnatural, and impracticable duty; of indiscriminate, and promiscuous philanthropy. Enthusiastick minds would be seized with a wild, quixotic ardour; they would spurn their families, their occupations, and their countries, as objects too mean, and limited for their unbouded principle.

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ciple, and sphere of action. They would embark for *Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where*, to befriend the inhabitants of distant, and inhospitable regions.

Of patriotism he gives his readers as false a picture as of friendship. We are impelled, he says, by the spirit of patriotism, to aggrandize our own country by invading, and seizing the territories of our neighbours. But surely he is not authorized by the genuine meaning of the word, nor by any learned, and judicious writer, who hath defined and recommended the virtue, to make *this* the characteristic of a patriot. If it is, Alexander, the tyrant of Greece, in prosecuting his extravagant enterprize to subdue the world, was an illustrious Grecian patriot; and our modern nabobs, who cut throats, and plunder in India, without remorse, are eminent British patriots. If he takes his model of patriotism from a complicated survey of the old Romans, who, indeed, in the early, and glorious times of their commonwealth, were an astonishing race of patriots; he has viewed that great people with a confused political eye, and hath not separated their spirit of patriotism from their military ambition. I apprehend, that

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the idea of patriotifm is clear to every good, unprejudiced, and fenfible mind; and that it depends not on the mode of conduct of any particular ftate, ancient or modern. But, if we are to contemplate its archetype in fome community, let us recur to Lacedæmon, which for this virtue was by far the moft celebrated of all commonwealths. We know that the inftitutions of Lycurgus were fingularly calculated to render the Spartans temperate, and hardy; fimple in their manners, and extremely moderate in their defires. By the fame inftitutions all the citizens were bred foldiers — foldiers, who would be intrepid, and invincible in defending their own little territories; but in whom a wifh would not arife to invade their neighbours; and to whom it was made impoffible, by other articles of his policy, to extend their dominion. Thus he provided for the virtue, and duration of his commouwealth like a true patriot. He knew that the good effects of his internal œconomy would be defeated, if the love of external power fhould feize the Spartans; he knew that conquest, wealth, and an intercource with polite nations, were deftructive to patriotifm; to the freedom, to the permanence

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permanence of a state. Sparta continued virtuous, and free five hundred years: the wishes of Sparta were five hundred years limited by the bounds of Laconia: Sparta was five hundred years governed rigidly by the laws of Lycurgus: and we may add, with little hyperbole, that, during all those happy ages, every Spartan was a patriot. The character of this famous republic was singular; and her long, and uniform obedience to her laws was almost unexampled. But her decline, and catastrophe were common. For when the arms of the Lacedæmonians were turned from the just, and salutary purpose of self-defence, and were exerted for the mean objects of interest, or for the chimerical projects of ambition, their vigour, and their glory, like those of all other states, decayed; till, at length, by this fatal irreverence to the memory of the great Lycurgus, they lost their virtue, and consequently their *patriotism*. So different, so abhorrent, is the spirit of conquest from the spirit of patriotism, both in theory, and in fact; though Mr. Jenyns makes the former the striking lineament, the criterion of the latter.

True patriotism includes moral, as well as political virtue. The true patriot is a faithful, and zealous friend; a tender, attentive, and exemplary father of a family: for he well knows how much those amiable, and estimable characters contribute to the prosperity of a state. As the patriot can only exist in a free community, he is a watchful, and warm assertor, and protector of the laws of his country. Yet the general temper of his mind is extremely mild, and humane. He ardently wishes for the preservation of private, and public harmony: peace is to *him*, for it is to the human species, an invaluable blessing; and he never thinks of the horrors of war without shuddering for mankind. But if public freedom, the eternal and invariable rights of man, are seized by invasion from abroad, or stolen by corruption at home, the gentleness is succeeded by the flame of the patriot; a hallowed flame, originating from the incontrovertible principles of morality, and religion. His eloquence, and his sword descend like lightning on the foes of *liberty*. [The word, in its just and generous acceptation, can never grow trite, and obsolete.] For he is conscious that he cannot
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give up his liberty, without turning a rebel to the Supreme Being; without being a traitor to the Divine Oeconomy; without ceasing to be a man: for rational, and moral liberty is the image of God in which we were made. He is conscious that, under the gloom of despotism, the mind grows ignorant, abject, mechanical, profligate, detestable in manners, and totally corrupt in religion; and that it is only under the bright and vigorous auspices of liberty, that the human race are instructed and civilized; that society is improved, adorned, and made happy; that genius is allowed its noble range; that man is befriended by man without controul; and the Deity worshipped with a reasonable, and acceptable service. Hence patriotism is so far from being incompatible with the precepts of the gospel, that the true patriot, and the true christian are only different expressions, which convey the same idea.

The authour of the Internal Evidence of the christian religion deserves the censure which is thrown from the West end of the town on the *mob*; (for the court, a Caligula at least in language, dispatches, with that

monosyllable, all those who differ from a blundering, and oppressive administration) "He talks about Patriotism, without knowing what the word means."—Or, if he has aimed at ingenious, and sophistical refinement, all his ingenuity consists in misapplying terms, and perplexing ideas; in confounding friendship with a selfish, and puerile partiality; patriotism with ambition; and valour with ferocity.

I must beg pardon of the reader for having made a long repetition of what, I doubt not, he well knew. He will the more readily forgive me for this repetition, when I apologize for it, by informing him, that I thought I could not be too minute in vindicating, against an authour whose book has gained an unmerited popularity, those noble connexions, virtues, and pleasures, which contribute most to our happiness, and which do most honour to human nature. And I flatter myself, that the topicks, at least, with which I have supported my cause, are pleasing to recollection, entertaining to fancy, and favourable to virtue.

If it was the sincere, and earnest intention of this author to illustrate and recommend the christian religion, in *him* it hath certainly
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found an unfortunate patron; for the tenour of his book directly tends to make its morality impracticable, and its mysteries absurd. He seems, however, to have surveyed his treatise, before he sent it abroad; this little Minerva that issued from a mortal head, with a true paternal affection, and complacency. The illustrious Montesquieu, relatively to himself and other great political authours, had a right to say with Corregio—"Ed Io anche son pittore."—The inimitable Rousseau had a right to tell an unfeeling, and mechanical archbishop, that "in a virtuous, and well-governed commonwealth, statues would have been erected to the authour of *Emilius*."—But certainly too much was assumed by Mr. Jenyns, when he chose for a motto to his treatise on Christianity—"Almost thou persuadest me to be a christian."—For my own part, if I was convinced that the christian religion spoke, from its own impulse, that very language which he, by torture, compells it to speak, I would immediately abjure it, and strenuously endeavour, as far as my poor abilities could avail, to prevent the diffusion of its baneful influence; to prevent mankind from de-
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throning nature, and reason ; from becoming drones, dastards, and slaves.

His book, however, as soon as it was published, met with a very favourable reception in the circle of majesty. Its authour was congratulated on his performance by his sovereign ; the royal approbation was echoed round St. James's, and shot forth into applause. I am confident that a flash of transitory fame gratifies extremely the self-love of this authour ; though it will always be despised by those who distinguish fashion from judgement ; and who know with what strength, symmetry, and beauty, those literary productions are invigorated, and adorned, which confer immortality. A religious book, in which the authour endeavours to prove, that Christianity prescribes a poor, squalid, hermitical, and most rigorous life, was published by a writer, who pants for a ribbon ; and admired by a court which is notorious for its love of pleasure, magnificence, and dominion. This is a paradoxical, but not an unaccountable truth.

The tracts of Mr. Jenyns have a remarkable characteristick, which one would not envy their authour. They leave the mind
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of the reader in a state of uncertainty, and confusion. Indeed, with regard to the merit of his last publication, I felt no suspense. It was evident, as I read, that the arguments were neither forcible, nor ingenious; and that the style was neither elegant, nor correct. Yet, even in consequence of perusing *this* treatise, I was in some degree embarrassed. I could not determine from what inducement it was written. I shall mention three motives; of which the authour must acknowledge one. 1. He wrote it, either from an honest zeal for the cause of truth, and religion; to show the mistaken world their christian duty; 2. or as a timid, and ironical enemy of religion; to make it ridiculous, and contemptible. 3. If “The view of “the Internal Evidences of the Christian “Religion” was dictated by neither of these motives, it was written to quell the free spirit which yet remains in this country—to sink English minds to a torpor, a pusillanimity, a servile submission to the most unconstitutional mode of government with which we may be threatened—to sacrifice liberty, and christianity at the shrine of despotism. If he was actuated by the first motive

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tive, we have an infallible proof of the weakness of his head: if he was impelled by either of the last, I leave the proper epithet for his heart to the verdict of his conscience.

D I S-

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LIEUTENANT ROBERTS

of the Horse-Guards.

Dear Sir,

YOU may remember that, above a year ago, you desired that I would give you a Sermon in the Chapel of the Horse-guards. As I never forget the request of a Friend, I wrote the following Discourse, in which my sincere, and unprejudiced thoughts on the most important objects, are directly communicated to Gentlemen of your profession. I have been prevented from addressing you

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in

in the Pulpit, by some unexpected vicissitudes in my life. I hope my Sermon will now be honoured with your perusal, and with the attention of the publick. If it proves of moral use to any of his Majesty's Officers, my time in composing it was well employed.

I had the happiness to form an acquaintance with Gentlemen of the Army, in my brightest years; while my mind was free from painful objects; and therefore open to the pleasures and improvements of society. And I can assure you, without flattery, that many military men are yet deeply impressed in my memory, whose manners were examples of true politeness, and whose hearts, and talents did honour to Literature, and to Friendship.

[*31]

These are most amiable, and engaging characteristicks : and they certainly deserve to be guarded, adorned, and dignified with all the virtues.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

and most obedient servant,

PERCIVAL STOCKDALE.

Portsmouth,
Jan. 28th, 1777.

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DISCOURSE I.

On the ADVANTAGES and PLEASURES of
RELIGION in this World.

Page 100

DISCOURSE I.

I THESS. Ch. V. v. 16.

Rejoice evermore.

TH E S E are the words of our Saviour to his apostles, and disciples. I shall consider them in their own immediate force, without explaining, and inculcating the objects of their connexion in the passage from which they are transcribed. I shall endeavour to prove that no teacher of morality had so good a right as the authour of the christian religion, from the serene, and benevolent spirit of his precepts, to bid us rejoice evermore, or be happy through the tenour of our lives.

Nothing has more obstructed the influence of the christian dispensation on the hearts of mankind than the gloomy tenets of many of its teachers, and the moroseness of their manners.

How egregiously have these men mistaken the system, and the conduct of their divine master ;

32 DISCOURSE I.

master ; whose laws are all dictated by gentleness, and candour ; who recommends, and enforces universal good-will, and universal good offices — who, though superiour himself to any *common* interest with the world ; to its pleasures, and its luxuries, yet often mixed with society, and was often a guest at entertainments — who, at a marriage-feast, even wrought his first miracle, by turning water into wine, to prolong innocent mirth, and nuptial gaiety — who, against the hypocritical envy of the Jews, defended the woman who perfumed his head — who, though he displayed, in a human form, the perfection of virtue, was so opposite to an old Pharisee, or a modern high-priest, that he conversed with publicans, and sinners, to subdue their prejudices and vices, by his mild, and simple, yet vigorous, and resistless, eloquence ; — and to convert them, by a stronger persuasive, his own example — who, in favour of offenders, caught in the commission of gross crimes, tempered the rigour of the Jewish law with his generous, and expanded equity — who never sunk the unhappy culprit to melancholy and despair ; but always raised him to consolation, and to hope !

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DISCOURSE I. 33

What an amiable, what an engaging, what an affecting character is this! and that it is a true character of Christ, will be acknowledged by every one who has read the Gospels with an attentive, and honest mind. Yet how strangely has it been misrepresented by many who pretended to study, to understand, and to explain the Scriptures! How has it been traduced, and disfigured by the Monk, and the Puritan! Our Saviour was undoubtedly invincible to the allurements of sense, and passion; as was evident from the simplicity, and purity of his life. And to *him*, whose better part was an immediate emanation from the Deity, retirement must have been infinitely preferable to a promiscuous communication with the world: for in retirement he held high converse with Angels, with himself, and with the Father of the Universe — objects which must have afforded him the sublimest enjoyment. But while he was conscious that he was God, he remembered that we were but men; he did not forget the great end for which he came down from Heaven. He was diligent to instruct the ignorance, to reform the depravity of human nature; and to exhibit, in his personal intercourse with

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mankind, a model of moral rectitude. These salutary, and excellent purposes he greatly promoted, by frequenting company; by that affability, openness, and humanity; by that voluntary, easy, and social adoption of the customs, and manners of the world (as far as was consistent with the laws, and with morals) which were such conspicuous qualities in all his demeanour.

As I hope I have dispelled from this bright, and attractive person the fable cloud which had been thrown around him by black enchanters, you will not be surprized that he bids us *rejoice*. Nor will you be surprized that he bids us rejoice *evermore*, when we have taken a view of that œconomy of life which is productive of permanent happiness.

It is as absurd to suppose that human happiness can result from a careless, and thoughtless life; from living at random, or by chance, as to suppose that the *universe* was an effect of chance. For if we imagine that we can enjoy whatever is valuable and agreeable, without plan and reflexion, we must charge the Creator with absurdity; we must infer that he has given us reason in vain: that distinguishing,
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and noble faculty, which elevates us above all other beings in the visible world; which is our guide in every great achievement; by which we discover the sublimest truths; by which we anticipate immortality, and demonstrate a God. Here I shall drop a supposition directly repugnant to common sense: to disprove it by a more minute refutation, would be an affront to your hearts, and understandings.

Prudence, in modern language, is often illustrated by being pronounced the hand-maid of all the other virtues. I shall beg leave, however, at present, to give it a far more extensive signification, and a much greater dignity. I shall make it imply the culture, and energy of mind which trains us to the love of every virtue, and which enables us to exert every virtue as occasion offers. I am warranted to use it in this meaning, by the authority of the ancient sages, who gave it the same latitude, and weight. It is observed by the greatest of the * Roman Satyrists, that if we are under the tuition of prudence, we may be assured of the favour and protection of all the other Gods; and that it was owing to the folly, the negligence, and the vices of mankind, that temples had

* Juvenal.

been erected to fortune, that imaginary, and capricious deity. I need not remark that the prudence which I am explaining, is a far more generous and diffused idea, and moves in a much nobler sphere than the common kind of caution that we term discretion; by which the dull, and the selfish are generally governed, and which is often associated with cunning, that ungentlemanly, timid, and contemptible quality. The prudence which I now define, and which I mean to recommend to my audience, with respect, and deference, comprehends the established moral system, and the habitual conduct of a well-disciplined, ingenuous, and liberal mind; which after all the subtle, and verbal distinctions; all the mysteries, confessions, penances, and absolutions of priests, is equivalent to the substance of our religion; to practical christianity.

Synonymous with this signification of prudence is the idea conveyed by the word, *Wisdom*, in the book of Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes: by which word the authour means genuine morality, or virtue; the laws of God provided for human conduct, as they impress our mind, by an easy exercise of its faculties, or as they are delivered to us by Revelation;—or a steady, and conscientious obedience

DISCOURSE I. 37

obedience to their precepts. Wisdom, as the word is used by Solomon, has a peculiar emphasis, and beauty, when we reflect that it is rather a prudential, and moral than a religious expression ; and that a future state was, at least, not fully revealed under the Jewish theocracy ; though it has been, since, almost demonstrated by the most virtuous, and celebrated philosophers ; and was infallibly brought to light by the gospel.

Hence we may infer that the *Prudence* of the old sages, and the *Wisdom* inculcated by Solomon, and strongly recommended and enforced by Christ, comprehends the substance of true morality and religion. They comprehend that system of conduct exerted in action which results from that veneration of the supreme being with which the God of order, and truth can only be well pleased ;—from an impartial, generous, and noble interest in the welfare of mankind ; and from that well-regulated, and meritorious love of ourselves which produces our permanent, and indeprivable happiness. All, that good sense, all that good policy, all that good men, all that God requires of us, is to act agreeably to our nature ; to make our lives useful, reputable, and pleasant. If a being

in whom reason is the distinguishing, and the noblest, and in whom it ought to be the governing faculty, acts in contradiction to reason, he acts inconsistently with his constitution; he leads an unnatural life; and therefore, he must inevitably be unhappy. If you are weak enough to take your idea of the Judge of all the earth from the impious dogmas of a selfish, and artful Jesuit, you find him represented as an oriental despot, whose prohibitions, and commands tend only to mortify, and torment his vassals. But if you view him through the serene and elevated medium of generous, and amiable philosophy; or if you deduce his moral attributes from the genuine spirit of his written laws; as we are apt to impress infinite objects on our minds by circumscribed, and familiar images, you will chuse for *his* emblem, a provident, wise, and affectionate father, who directs all his precepts to the good of his family; and who, by his restrictions, and severities only obliges them to be happy. The conduct which entitles us to an eternal inheritance in the next world, ensures our temporary satisfaction in *this*. The constituents of the virtuous man's happiness *here*, are congenial with the objects

jects which will make him happy *hereafter*. He ascends from this world to heaven on a scale of a regular series, of uninterrupted progression. Its gradation is compact; and it is fixed, like the descriptive ladder in the dream of the patriarch. Its foot is on earth; its summit is in the skies.

Hitherto I have shown by general arguments, and observations, that pleasure can only brighten the current of our lives by our obedience to the laws of christianity. In the remaining part of my Discourse, I shall urge the same truth by an induction of particular instances; instances, which, however perspicuous, well known, and familiar; how often soever they have been repeated, and inculcated by moralists, and divines; as they are of the greatest importance, and as, in practice they are much neglected, cannot be too frequently recapitulated, and enforced.

The authour of our religion, with a paternal care, prohibits dissipation, intemperance, and profligacy: by which prohibition he is so far from enjoining a life of gloom and austerity, that he points out the way to health, cheerfulness, vivacity, and every lively enjoyment, both of body, and

mind. For if we are licentious, and dissolute, we ruin our constitutions, and our circumstances ; and he, who, without health, and without money, can maintain a rejoicing humour, must be diametrically opposite in disposition to the rest of mankind. Then this extravagance, and sensuality alienate the affection of our best, and most respectable friends, and make us contemptible in the eyes of the publick. For insensible as men are, in our superficial and luxurious times, to moral and religious merit, they will give most power, and homage to those, whom, by their talents, and applications, they find most useful. And men of abilities, and industry, may, with the more confidence anticipate these requitals of their services, from the very essence, and complexion of the age. But a life of idleness, prodigality, and debauchery, to view its mildest consequence, breaks all our force, and renders us useless to ourselves, and others.

Thus by neglecting to form the excellent habits of practical christianity, which are terms synonymous with the noblest moral self-government, we forfeit health, fortune, respect, and fame ; objects, which for indisputable

DISCOURSE I. 41

putable reasons, are dear to the heart, and estimation of man. And we may far more probably conclude that he who has lost *them*, will be overwhelmed with a cloud of melancholy, and despair, than that the cloud will be penetrated by a gleam of serenity, or joy.

The christian religion reprehends indolence; commands us to improve our understandings; to be diligent in our respective callings; and to exert universal and active benevolence. And surely experience evinces that we cannot be too much on our guard against every propensity to indolence. She steals on us imperceptibly; and if we give way to her seduction, she, at length, enslaves, and oppresses us with her leaden sceptre. She is the lounging, the lethargic, the rank parent of a foul progeny. On her, imagination generates the vices; and squalid poverty closes her hideous train. And even they, whose trifling, and superficial habits have precluded the admission of knowledge, will own, from a generous instinct, and impulse, which cannot always be suppressed, and which can never be totally extinguished, that to exercise, and en-
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large the understanding, is one of our purest, and most exalted enjoyments.

But though few in any country, comparatively with all its inhabitants, can be scholars, and men of science, it is evident that laudable application, in every rank, and profession, is essential to our credit, and happiness. If a mechanic, for instance, one who subsists by the daily labour of his hands, grows tired of industry, gives way to indolence, and consequently to intemperance, he must expect soon to encounter self-reproaches which are painful, and want which is intolerable.

I shall not presume to doubt, or to supersede your feelings, by giving you a particular encomium on universal, and active benevolence; on its diffusive, and benign effects, and on the sublime pleasure which its offices afford to those by whom they are performed. The discharge of its duties is attended with a most heartfelt satisfaction; with a moral triumph in our existence. And though it appears from the habitual, and flagrant immoralities of many, that the rebukes of conscience are not so general, so frequent, and so forcible as is commonly supposed, yet truth will warrant us to assert, that

that they whose dispositions are naturally ingenuous, and who have wasted most of their time on fashionable folly, without acquiring liberal knowledge; without a regular, and attentive performance of the duties of their station; and without doing good to their fellow-creatures, are so far from holding a pleasurable current of life, that reflection often checks its flow, and, in their silent hours, they despise, and hate themselves. Permit me to repeat a trite, but most important observation.—As the moral sense is quickest, and strongest; as it most keenly resents the indignities, and insults it receives, in constitutions of the best frame; and as our immaterial principle, our intellective faculty, is our most distinguishing characteristick; as it elevates us above all the rest of the visible creation; and I may add, without presumption, makes us, in some degree, congenial with the deity; every man who aspires to attain the end of his being, and consequently to ensure his happiness, will be assiduous to controul, and regulate his passions, and appetites; to keep in orderly and uniform subjection the animal part of his composition, and to cultivate the virtues, and graces of the mind.

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Unhappily for the true dignity, for the solid and permanent welfare of you, military gentlemen, the world allows more dissipated and licentious manners to *your* profession than to any other. This indulgence is particularly unfavourable to the virtue of those officers, and soldiers who reside chiefly in this metropolis, where there are so many temptations to every vice that is mean, and base, and enormous; and where there are such powerful incentives, such exquisite and almost irresistible allurements to those passions which are often strongest in the most generous, and noble minds; and by which the most generous, and noble minds too often suffer a melancholy revolution, grow corrupt, rapaciously selfish, and totally abandoned. Far be it from me to mean a particle of illiberal censure on a profession, which, though it has its moral disadvantages to repel, is, in some very material respects, an excellent school for expansion of sentiment, and action, and trains its followers to disinterestedness, and greatness of mind. Therefore, I hope, my audience will not impute the observations I shall now offer, to a supercilious, censorious, sacerdotal ha-

dit of declaiming; with which disagreeable style, I flatter myself, every period of this discourse is unclouded;—but to that ingenuous freedom, with which it is our duty to proceed in every moral, and religious inquiry.—In my subsequent remarks I shall be a courtier inverted. My language may be blunt, and rough: but my intention is honest, candid, and good.

The world indispensably exacts no better morals from a military officer than it requires from a lord. Both are insurmountably restrained only by modern honour:—not by that honour which gives us a compendious idea of every virtue;—that honour which controuls, modifies, and regulates our thoughts, and words, and actions;—that honour which is universal, most manly, and most benevolent;—not by that honour, which, in the language of the poet, is *the noble mind's distinguishing perfection*; not by that honour which is investigated, and evinced by reason, and which is confirmed, and ratified by Christianity;—but by a partial, selfish, despicable, and odious tyrant, to whom its votaries have preposterously, and impiously prostituted
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the name of honour; that sublime, that sacred appellation.—It is a meteor shot from courts, which not only perpetrate, but authorize the worst evils; and it is kept alive by the vapours of prejudice, and fashion.—'Tis a daemon that has taken possession of the human breast, and confounds all our ideas of right and wrong. Under the auspices of this daemon we may spurn the rights of hospitality; we may be guilty of the blackest ingratitude, and inhumanity; we may cheat, we may murder, we may betray; without being responsible to the laws of our country; without being banished from society — provided we are determined, and obdurate enough in wickedness, always to be ready to vindicate, and expiate one heinous crime by the commission of another.

You are very conversant with society; therefore you will allow that I have not drawn an aggravated picture of the fashionable principles, and manners of our times. I am persuaded that none whom I now have the honour to address, are so blinded by bad habits, and prejudice, or so weak in understanding, or so poor in sentiment, and taste,

taste, as to be dupes to the false honour, instead of votaries to the true; as to mistake the deformity of the hag for the charms of the goddess. But such is the strength of passion, and the infirmity of human nature; and such the contagion of example, that even worthy, and respectable men often deviate from rectitude of conduct. If our character is motley; if it is a grotesque mixture of genuine, and modern honour, we may have the approbation of a trifling world, which is content with superfcials. If we are impressed and actuated by the fiend who arrogates the name of honour, we may be tolerated in an indiscriminating, and iniquitous world, where people in some ranks, and situations commit the most shocking crimes, under the eye of the publick, without punishment, and without contempt.—But we may be convinced of the truth of this proposition, as of a geometrical axiom — that if we pay an ardent, and consistent homage to true honour, which is equivalent to true virtue, and true religion, we shall certainly be *happy*; and if we have strong, or bright abilities, and move in a sphere which gives them

them play, by a strict obedience to the laws of true honour, we shall, most probably be *great*.

To pass through life merely uncensured, or merely tolerated, cannot satisfy a liberal mind. Every generous youth will aspire to be one day at the head of his profession. And how can a gentleman of the army, for instance, fairly, and laudably effect that aim, as by a close, and vigorous attention to his many military duties?—And what means will so powerfully enable him to call forth such attention, whenever it is required, as moral self-government?—For while we are under the direction of that salutary, and amiable guide, we are neither diverted from important objects, by sensual passions, and frivolous amusements; nor are we intoxicated, and stupified by dissipation, and intemperance.

The art of war, in its present state, is an arduous, and complicated science. It is not attained by wearing splendid regimentals, nor by marching, and relieving guards to the musick of the Park; nor by performing the various evolutions at a gay, and insignificant Review, before a modern king.
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DISCOURSE I. 49

The military character is of a different substance, and complexion. The soldier trains his body to health, vigour, and elasticity; and his mind to intuitive, as well as elaborate comprehension. His penetration, exertion, and achievements are habitual in the closet; and they are habitual in the field. It was thus, that young Epaminondas was formed under Philip of Macedon; and young Churchill under Turenne.

And what will give you such activity of body and mind; what will so facilitate your studies; what will enable you so manfully to surmount hardships, as high, and athletic health; as moderate indulgence in sensual pleasure; as a consciousness of the practical observation of the whole system of moral duties?—What will make you so indifferent to dangers, and to death; what will drive you so like lightning on the enemies of your country, as a recollection of your justice, and integrity; as a recollection of the noble offices you have done to the indigent, and distressed, from an enthusiastick spirit of universal benevolence.

And if your advancement in the army keeps pace with your most sanguine wishes; and if you are ambitious of the highest mi-

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litary honour; be assured, *that* general will be chosen a commander in chief, whose fame in arms is joined with an eminent moral reputation;—whose integrity is incorruptible; who is always master of himself; who, in the exercise of power, knows, and exerts a proper temperature of rigour, and humanity; whose understanding is as cool, and clear, as it is vigorous, and acute; whose penetration darts through every quarter around him; who provides for possible events, and accidents with an extensive anticipation; and who meets the difficulties, and dangers which are actually present, with a determined courage; with an ardour which never confuses, or disturbs, but brightens, and accelerates his judgement.

With so respectable, and important a person the military interest, and glory of his country would undoubtedly be intrusted by a minister, though profligate in soul himself; if he was but a distinguisher of characters; if he was conversant with human nature; and but a moderate politician. His heart might be too frozen to vibrate with a sympathy for Virtue; he would not visit her in obscurity; he would not relieve
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DISCOURSE I. 51

her distress: though in her mute, yet eloquent, and emphatic woe; she passed before his eye. But if he saw her conspicuously situated; armed with talents, and power, and crowned with the praise of a nation; he would confer on her utility, what he would refuse to her more amiable, to her godlike merit. He would select her, as an instrument of great consequence to the state; he would give her, amongst other candidates, his cold and circumspective preference.

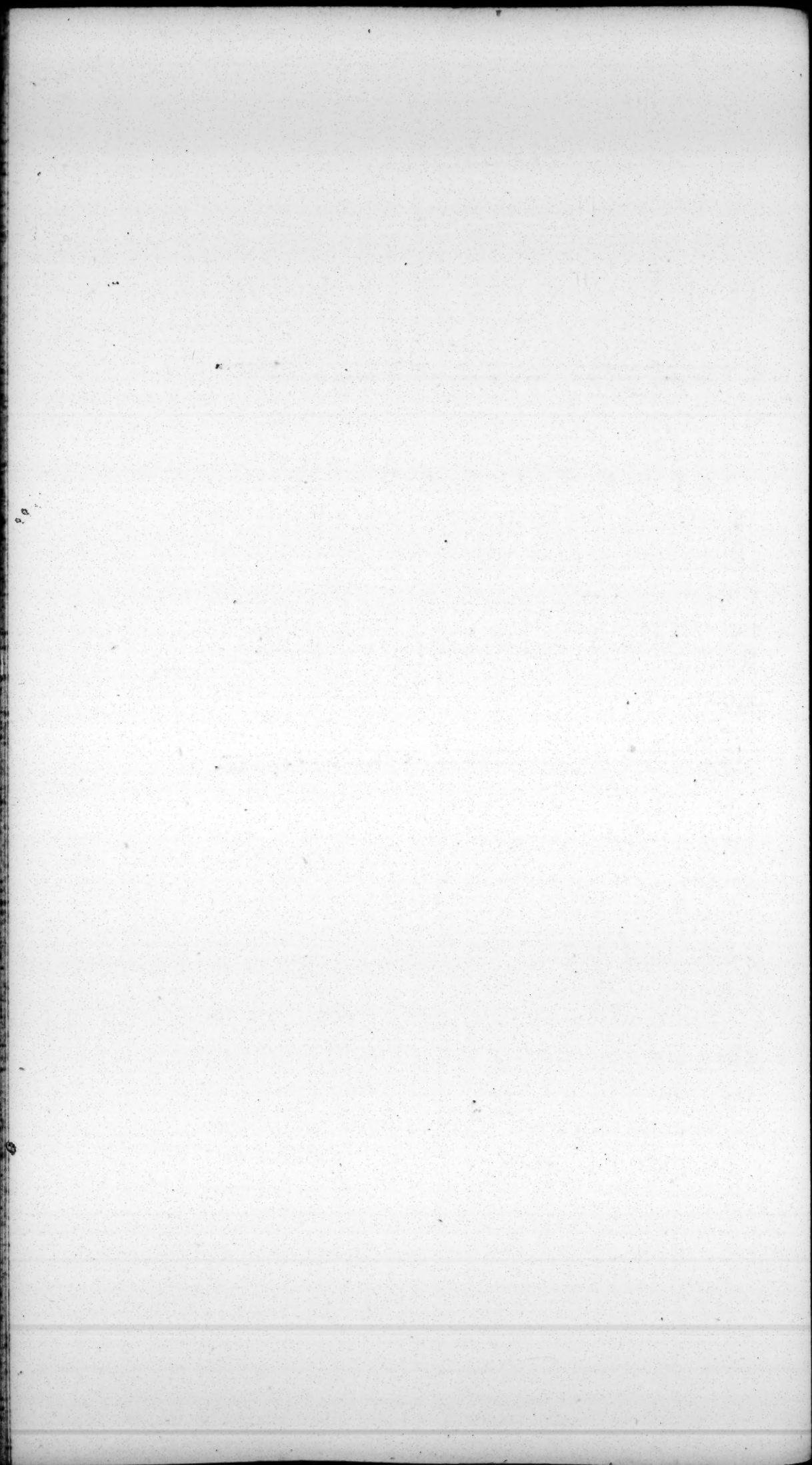
I doubt not that many of my audience know thoroughly, and practice diligently, their moral, as well as military duties. I request them, therefore, to pardon my prolixity for the sake of its motive, a sincere zeal for their credit, and durable enjoyment of life. I am restrained from being more diffuse, by calling to mind that fluent, and presumptuous pedant, of whom we are told in history, that he prated for hours before Annibal, that consummate general, about the art of war.

You will not, however, think that I have departed from my province, by endeavouring to shew that in every profession, and situation, Christian virtue is the great promoter of our true interest, and consequently of our true happiness. Mild, and modest, and

humble as she is, she not only gilds *the cool, sequestered vale of life*, and improves its fragrance, but likewise adorns necessary splendour, and gives force to necessary tumult. He who is ambitious, and assiduous to be renowned *even in war*, will, with most probability, acquire his object, by adopting into his life *the gospel of peace*. This proposition is paradoxical in sound; but in fact, it is as demonstrable as it is true.

DISCOURSE II.

On the good EFFECTS of PERSEVERANCE
in our MORAL, and RELIGIOUS Conduct.



DISCOURSE II.

GEN. Ch. XLIX. v. 4. Part of.

Unstable as water, thou shalt not excell.

JACOB, or Israel, the Patriarch, called to him on his death-bed, the heads of the twelve tribes of the Jews. He prophesies their characters, and their destinies. Reuben his eldest son, to use his own words, was *his might, the beginning of his strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power*. These were seemingly circumstances, and properties much in his favour; but the good effects, which they might have produced, were all to be prevented, by the character which his father foretells of him, in the words of the text—*Unstable as water, thou shalt not excell.*

I intend to consider these words, *not* as they are immediately connected in the chapter from which I have taken them;—but as a general, and most useful moral and religious maxim; worthy of our recollection,

and reflexion;—because however clear, and obvious its truth may be, we never sufficiently attend to it in our conduct, as prudent men of *this world*, or as prudent men of *the next*. And because, if we did properly attend to it, in our temporal, and eternal capacities, we should be extremely happy.

The noblest human acquisitions are only to be attained by steadiness, and perseverance. A great progress in knowledge, which next to virtue, does most honour to human nature, cannot be made, by the strongest, and most lively genius, but by severe attention, and by slow degrees. Those scholars, who publish their thoughts to the world, if they are men of discernment, and taste, find it a very difficult matter to write good English, to manage their mother-tongue. With much difficulty they please themselves after they have been long accustomed to write; and even then, not without great care, and circumspection in all their compositions. Socrates, that glorious luminary of the heathen world, after having grown old in improving, and adorning his mind with every valuable endowment, smiled at the weakness of man, when

he reflected how much his ignorance exceeded his knowledge. The superficial scholars, and writers of these times, differ as much from Socrates in their opinion concerning the obtaining of knowledge, as *his* fortune is different from *theirs*. For their names are hardly known; but the name of Socrates is immortal.

It hath pleased the good providence of God to make it necessary to the generality of mankind, to gain a subsistence for themselves, and their families, by *steady* industry, or labour. Here instability, or unsteadiness is evidently attended with destruction. To give my argument all its force, I shall refer you to the trading part of the world; and to the trading part of the world in our metropolis, where the consequences of industry, and of levity, and idleness, are more strongly felt, and seen than in any other place. *There*, by patient, and long perseverance, decent, nay, affluent fortunes are made, from the poorest beginnings. And I should hope that in most of such instances, a strict regard to justice, at least, is observed; for though honesty, in every department of life, is the best policy; in gradual prosperity, by commerce, it seems absolutely necessary; and I cannot find how
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that prosperity can go on without it. I must beg leave to observe that some bad exceptions do not weaken this general rule.

Wealth, indeed, is sometimes gained by shorter means. People, sometimes, without sacrificing their probity, are put into the possession of ample fortunes, by unexpected, and rare accidents : but such accidents are not very desirable, if we consider the infirmity of human nature : for he who becomes rich on a sudden, seldom useth his riches wisely.—A man sometimes acquires great affluence by one bold, and decisive act of villainy. But what *his* enjoyment must be, I appeal to you, my fellow-christians.—Conscience preys upon his heart, and throws a sickly hue over all his splendour.

In a certain quarter of the globe, to the dishonour, and shame of the British name, and nation, some insatiable adventurers make enormous fortunes in a few years, by extortion, rapine, and barbarity. But what is the fate of these men ? Mark their end.—Their minds are distracted between a sense of guilt, and wild flashes of triumph on their new acquisitions. The idea of their immense wealth astonishes, and bewilders them. Unaccustomed even to liberal circumstances, it
fits

sits awkwardly upon them. It is cumbrous, it is a burden to them. Unprincipled, and profligate as they are, they soon determine to squander it licentiously. They make shipwreck of their small remains of a good conscience abroad; and they return hither, to make themselves ridiculous in the eyes of all men of sober sense, and to complete the ruin of their constitutions. Surrounded with their transitory glitter, they may justly be compared to those short-lived meteors, which mislead the traveller. Like them they shoot irregular, interrupted rays for a while, and then are no more. Like them, they rise from a morass; and like them, in a morass they die.

But sweet is the bread of honest, patient, steady, persevering industry. He who hath prudently chosen it for his viaticum through Life, gains money by degrees. He is not therefore, disconcerted, and driven from his post, by a sudden influx of wealth. His attention to his business guards him from immoral deviations, from the extravagant caprice of fancy. What he has earned by the blessing of providence on his modest endeavours, he expends discreetly, and sensibly. He makes it contribute to his convenience,

nience, to his health, and to the relief of his indigent neighbour.—Then he enjoys that peace of mind, that sunshine of the soul, which is infinitely more valuable than all the jewels of India.

Your impious cavillers against the œconomy of God; your free-thinkers, who think so fast that they are not half-thinkers, object (among their other stupid objections) to the scheme of providence, that the acquisition of what is necessary, of what is convenient, and of what is noble, is so difficult, and painful to man. But if we rightly consider our nature, nothing can appear more absurd than their profane impeachment. Man is a degenerate, a depraved creature. His propensity to vice is far stronger than his inclination to virtue. Now has not the DEITY, most benignly, and with a wisdom truly Divine, made application, and assiduity of mind necessary to Him?—That application, and that assiduity, which keep him not only innocent, but well-employed; which preserve him from wandering in the labyrinth of wickedness; which wean him imperceptibly, but effectually from the agitations of sense, and passion?

Besides,

DISCOURSE II. 61

Besides, in this case, what is painful at first, is pleasant afterwards. A close application to business, when it becomes habitual, is easy, natural, instinctive, agreeable.

If we take a view of our nobler pursuits, of our exertions in learning, and science, this truth will appear in a stronger light. We are so constituted in this world, that after being habituated for some time to the exercise of our intellectual faculties, we like to combat, and surmount difficulties; we would not wish to seize knowledge by intuition. Like a gallant general, we despise an easy victory;—it is our generous pride to reflect, that we have conquered, and that we have triumphed. Every object of our ardent study calls forth our noblest faculties;—strengthens, brightens, and delights the soul;—till at length, like Alexander, we begin to fear that we shall not have worlds enow to conquer.

The arguments, and topicks which I have offered to your consideration, I hope you will not think foreign to my subject: for they tend to show that stability, or steddiness is essential to our welfare; and therefore you may plainly infer from them, that *Instability*, it's reverse, is productive of misery.

I shall

I shall now beg your attention to the grand object which I particularly wished to unfold in this discourse: I mean that vigorous, and uniform plan of conduct, which, if seriously and resolutely put in practice, will prevent us from being unstable in the performance of our moral, and religious duties; and will enable us to excel in our Christian profession, as much as is possible to the infirmity of man.

Some authours, who have studied the history of the human race, reprove those who particularly exclaim against the age in which they live. They tell them that their hasty, and ill-grounded censure is only a proof of their ignorance, and spleen. They add, that in every age there existed an equal quantity of moral evil, which, as religion, policy, and manners varied, was of different kinds in different ages.—All this may be true; yet if we admit the proposition, I believe we may safely assert, that no age, from the time of Christ, has been more an enemy than the present is, to the practice of his pure, and holy religion. The rebellious, and impious giant, infidelity, hath grown to an enormous size, and traverses Europe with rapid, and haughty strides.

strides. Luxury, gaiety, a levity of behaviour, a trifling of life away, in a childish, contemptible, *French* manner, prevail among us to an alarming degree, and tend to eradicate every idea that is manly, moral, and religious. I hope the mind of every one in this congregation is sufficiently fortified against the attacks of the infidel; the light-armed troops which I have mentioned are most dangerous, most apt gradually to undermine, and to destroy religious principles. You cannot serve two masters; you cannot equally divide your time between a christian life, and a pursuit of Pleasure, without soon growing indifferent to your infinitely greater concern. The very supposition of such a course of life clearly shows its absurdity, its impiety. For how can a rational, and immortal Being bestow as much of his precious time on the trifles of sense, as on his improvement in virtue, without folly, without sacrilege?

Our natures have such a bias toward *sensual Pleasure*, and we are so apt to be enamoured of *gay scenes*, that he who knows what it is to be a true christian, and is resolved to maintain that most honourable of characters,

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characters, will be very moderate in his enjoyment of the *one*, and of the *other*. His principal attention will undoubtedly be payed to his immaterial part; to that celestial principle, which distinguishes him from the animal creation, and with the refinement he can give it, makes him approach to angels. He will be sparing in his recourse to inferiour objects, to those recreations which unhappily engross the modish world: and little amusement will go a great way with him, will tell far. For he will enjoy it thoroughly, because he will enjoy it rarely; and because, while he partakes of it, his mind will be at ease; he will be satisfied with himself. He will not only be satisfied with his past conduct, but with his present situation relatively to those around him. At places of public resort, he will not be agitated with the mean, selfish, tumultuous passions which often corrode the pleasure of those who go thither; which often make them put on an easy look with an aking heart. He will not sicken with envy, if others are greater favourites of the circle, or if they are more elegantly, and richly dressed than himself.

Let

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Let us consider the constitution of the human soul; what it can do, and what it can bear. It may do great things: It may rise to glorious heights, if it be resolutely trained. To give it the first of encomiums, it may make a great proficiency in christian virtue. But if we imagine that we can obtain this proficiency, without great circumspection, vigour of mind, and exertion of our best reason, and best affections; if we make all our religion consist in observing the stated ordinances of the church with much decency, and some devotion; in sometimes revolving our eternal interest for a quarter of an hour; in sometimes doing a pious act of charity; if, in short, we only keep up the character of those who seem to come under the idea of *good sort of people*, but who may with greater propriety be styled, *almost merely nominal Christians*;—if we think these weak attempts are sufficient to entitle us to happiness here, and hereafter; we shall find ourselves miserably mistaken; and we shall fall extremely short of the *mark of the prize of our high calling*.

They who are content with this flimsy practice, if they have any sprightliness of disposition, will certainly devote an unreasonable

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able

able number of their valuable hours to the dissipation of the times. They will be divided, they will be distracted, betwixt gawdy trifles, and their important duty. For want of that strenuous habit, which, by patient perseverance, conquers the difficulties of religion, and at length makes it highly agreeable, and pleasurable to our well-regulated nature, they will sometimes fall off from their faith, and think it too austere, and arduous for man. Sometimes, again, while a sense of religion remains, they will reproach themselves for making amusement, and diversion an employment; and will resolve, but they will *only resolve*, to make virtue, and piety, for the future, their chief care.—*Unstable as water, they shall not excell.* Their lives will be broken, and frittered away. We may pronounce them, with regard to their minds, beings of a doubtful species; half-worshippers of God; and half-worshippers of the world. The great danger is, that, by being much addicted to the pursuits of a licentious age, they will, in the end, quit all moral, and religious principle, and drive down the stream of fashion, and folly.

Look up to the authour and finisher of our faith, and the example of our practice.—An
example

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Example which, though we shall never equal, we should use all our efforts to imitate. He did not do good occasionally—only in short, and transitory acts, distant from each other—*He went about doing Good.* His whole life was a continued series of *meditation, prayer, temperance, chastity, meekness, affability, active, and universal benevolence, and forgiveness of the cruellest insults, and injuries.* I have allowed that we can never equal the uninterrupted holiness of the life of Christ. We cannot always be intent on serious, and divine objects; and we owe some of our time to innocent society. But I must here observe, to strengthen the arguments I have been inculcating, that of the pleasures of the world *our Saviour took none*; which, as we are to copy his model as nearly as we can, is a strong hint that *we should take few.*

If you would then excell as christians, you must not think that christian excellence is an easy, a superficial acquisition. It is not to be attained by actions of inferior morality, nor by mechanical postures. The precepts of the gospel must impress, and form your souls. They must characterize the tenour of your lives. Every thing must

way to them : and all this is not so difficult as you may imagine. In the beginning, and in part of the progress of a christian life, we meet with many formidable opponents, hard to be defeated by human infirmity. Undaunted resolution, however, and indefatigable perseverance, will defeat them. — As we proceed, we find *fewer* ; and at length we find *none*. We look back, with pleasure on our christian warfare—we are happy in our conquest, beyond expression.

The way to which Christ hath directed us, is, at first, rugged, and steep. As we advance, the asperities diminish, and the ascent grows more gentle. Till at length we arrive at the summit, which is a beautiful plain, blest with a most benign climate, watered with refreshing streams, and adorned with shady trees, and fragrant flowers.

Before I conclude, permit me to offer you some advice, which may assist you to make virtue, and piety not only practicable, but easy, and delightful.

I. Be regular, and fervent in your private, and public devotions to GOD. Frequent, sincere, and ardent addresses to the throne of grace, must greatly contribute to
guard

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guard our hearts against the seducements of Satan, of our passions, and of the world.

2. Meditate earnestly, but for a quarter of an hour, every morning, on some of those great objects that should often employ the thoughts of a christian.—On the transitory nature, on the vanity of every thing in this world but virtue.—On the infinite goodness of Christ, who led an humble life, and suffered a most painful, ignominious death for our redemption;—and on that omniscient God, who sees every moment, whether we by our conduct, are at all entitled to that redemption, or no. To look into this mirror of religious reflection, for a short space of time, would set your minds for the day.

3. Do not mix too much with the world. The majority of men are wicked. You cannot be conversant with promiscuous life, without stooping to compliances unworthy of a good man. If you are familiar with people of all dispositions, and habits, you will be in danger of prostituting your minds to flattery, of yielding to prejudicial excess, of hearing the licentious conversation of the dissolute, and the profane, with a seeming approbation; or, of not censuring it with a manly, and moral resentment. You will

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be in danger, too, of hurting your interest, of losing some of your best connexions. You expose *them*, when you expose *yourselves*, to the malignity, and envy of the publick. The world is a notorious deceiver, and traitor.

Be content with a few sensible, and intelligent friends, of good hearts, and good principles. With *them* you may cultivate rational, agreeable, and cheerful society, which is one of the most innocent, and best relaxations, and one of the sweetest charms of life. I should be glad to know what amusement we can have preferable to good conversation. It is at once entertaining, and instructive. And a mind of any vigour, and manly curiosity, likes that entertainment best which affords it some intellectual information.

RELIGION, too, may take her place in the social circle, with that mild, and pleasant mien, to which she is so well entitled; and which she often wears with so much dignity, tempered with so benign, and attractive a grace. She may lay aside her severer majesty, the authority of a lawgiver; and insinuate her influence into the hearts of
her

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her subjects, with the gentle manner of an affectionate friend, and an easy companion.

4. Permit me again to warn you against the allurements of that Siren, *Pleasure*. She often steals upon, and subdues, well-disposed, and generous hearts, whose errors, and faults we are particularly inclined to compassionate, and regret. God forbid that I should attempt to throw such a gloom over our amiable religion as to condemn a moderate indulgence in gaiety, and pleasure. There is no more actual, and immediate harm in dancing at an assembly, or in playing at cards without the evil spirit of gaming, than there is in walking across a chamber. If there *is*, I leave it to be found out, and explained, by the solitary, unnatural Hermit, the Presbyterian, or the Methodist. In sound morality, and religion, actions must necessarily have bad consequences, to be denominated vices; and they must necessarily be attended with good ones, to take the appellation of virtues. We cannot always be intent on serious objects; both nature and religion warrant us, at proper times, to unbend, and to be gay. But an immoderate pursuit of amusement, and di-

version is *the evil*; and therefore *that* we should avoid. For such excess, while it engrosses, weakens the mind, and renders it unfit for better occupations. Besides, if you would take a prudent share of pleasure, you must consider, that the power of enjoying it is worn out by too frequent a repetition; *that* recreation, which, by having recourse to it immoderately, becomes flat, and insipid, with a discreet, and temperate use of it, would always be lively, and poignant. Most of the votaries to pleasure, especially they who have the best understandings, frequent public places with great indifference, or rather listlessness of mind. They pay compliments, indeed, and smile, and converse cheerfully there; they want to convince a malevolent world, that they are happy; but that is all factitious; it is acting a part. If their hearts were audible, you would from *them* hear a different language. The truth is, they have no enjoyment at home; I mean, in their innermost home, within their own breasts. They find an active principle there, which they have never learned the inestimable art, properly to exert. But it must be exerted,
or

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or employed, one way or another. They dislike their own houses, too; that little society which has the best right to their company; a certain, and dreadful consequence of a life of dissipation. Deadened with a languor of soul, or tormented with self-reproaches, they repair again and again to the brilliant, but unsatisfactory scenes; commonly with some faint hopes that the pleasures of the present evening will make amends for the vacuum, or pains of the past. Thus a person in a fever imagines that he will be easier by a change of posture: though the unhappy man has experienced a thousand times, that the change contributes not at all, or but for a moment to his relief.—In short, these votaries to pleasure, palled with an immoderate attachment to it, and chagrined with the disagreeable consequences of their imprudent habit, although they daily resort to amusements, feel a stronger impulse *to fly from themselves, than to pursue them.*

It is an excellent mark of a man's heart, and morals, that he loves his family, and is happiest in their company. Such a sage, and worthy member of society enjoys a
calm,

calm, but heart-felt pleasure, which the conduct of the thoughtless, giddy, tinsel world, condemns them never to experience.

I flatter myself that my discourse hath not only tended to show the bad effects of instability; and the good effects of steadiness, in our temporal, and eternal, pursuits; but likewise that the whole Christian dispensation is admirably adapted to the nature, and destiny of man, as a mortal, as well as an immortal being;—and that the strictest precepts of our religion, though they may seem extremely harsh to those who have not patience to taste their sweets, are, if we adhere to them with perseverance, as productive of our health, peace, prosperity, and true enjoyment in *this world*, as of our happiness in *the next*.

This indissoluble connexion of our present well-being with our future felicity is a strong proof of the excellence of the Christian system, and that its authour was DIVINE.

If we consider often, and seriously this fatherly provision of God for both our states; and if that consideration makes a due impression in our minds; we shall obey
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the laws of Christianity as long as we live. We shall not be *unstable as water*, but *steady as a rock*; which continues firm, and immoveable, how roughly soever it may be assaulted by winds, and waves.

DIS-

DISCOURAGEMENT

It is a law of life that we live
in a world of sorrow and pain,
and we must learn to bear it
with a brave and cheerful heart.
For the only way to overcome
our troubles is to face them
with courage and faith.

DISCOURSE III.

The Distinctions between PRIDE, and
a PROPER and MANLY SPIRIT.

DISCOURSE

THE DUTY OF THE
PROTESTANT

D I S C O U R S E III.

ECCLES. Ch. X. Part of ver. 18.

Pride was not made for man.

BEFORE I illustrate my text by argument, and fact, it will be proper to define pride, to explain to you what it means. For though the word is used in every company almost every day, the vice is by no means distinctly understood; at least when we apply it to persons of our acquaintance. The reason of this misapprehension, is, that almost every man is infected with it more or less; and a distempered mind, like a distempered eye, comprehends not objects in their just character, and proportion. A man's exorbitant self-love, his gigantic opinion of his own consequence, may make him pronounce another person's behaviour to him, which may be only proper and manly, proud, and insolent.

For

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For pride proceeds from ill-grounded, and unwarrantable self-love ; and is one of the most disgusting, and odious ways of showing self-love. It is the vice of a selfish, sullen, and detestable mind, that would make every man around it, if it had power enough, its abject slave.

Thus the man of great talents, who, when he is in company with people of inferior abilities, is industrious to make them feel that inferiority, to eclipse the glimmering light of their minds with the blaze of genius, that they may feel pain, and shrink from the dazzling lustre ; and who accompanies his conversation with the air of the superiour, and the dictator, is an example of a proud man.

If a bishop can be supposed so far to forget his duty, which is, to exhibit in his life, as conspicuously as the infirmities of human nature will admit, a model of his mild, humane, and humble master—if he can so far forget his duty, as hardly to deign to speak to a worthy, and exemplary, but thread-bare country-curate, because his station in the church is low, and because he is poor ;—and when he does vouchsafe to speak to him, if he addresses him in such a
tone,

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tone, and with such a look as a Nebuchadnezzar would use to one of his disgraced courtiers;—if he can thus treat a virtuous brother, whom he should make his companion, and friend, whose wants he should relieve, whose *Heart* he should *cause to sing for joy*;—if in that *meek, open, and generous* class of men, such a monstrous individual can be found; he is a proud, unchristian prelate, and deserves as much to be excommunicated as the most notorious profligate.

If a person of a large fortune is intoxicated with the power which wealth confers; if from the possession of many thousands, which is accidental, and external, he arrogates to himself a prodigious share of native, and constitutional merit;—if he behaves to people in narrow circumstances with superciliousness, and contempt; and if he views his equals in wealth with a jealous, and gloomy eye (I shall go no further; for such men generally crouch to those who are far richer than themselves) such a man is unquestionably proud; and examples of this kind of pride are of daily occurrence, and innumerable.

For the fertility of such examples we may thank ourselves ; the common meanness, and servility of mankind. We are always complaining of the insolence of the rich ; and we encourage, we create that insolence by the profane incense we pay to these idols of our own creating. We are so bewitched with the idea of a wealthy man, that we pay him particular attention ; we flatter him, we are ingenious in finding opportunities to oblige him, though we expect no material return from *him* for our fawning assiduities. Is it then surprizing that the rich are drunk with our perfumes ; that they bestride the earth, and say within themselves,—“ We “ are Gods ? ”

Particular respect is due to no man merely on account of his wealth, be it ever so immense. This assertion is equally confirmed by reason, and by religion. The rich man who does all the good in his power with his wealth, is indeed a venerable, a godlike object ;—the rich man who makes his fortune only the instrument of his own irregular appetites, and passions, is an object of detestation ;—and he who makes himself no way remarkable with his wealth, is an object of contempt.

But

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But pride is not confined to people of eminent rank, and great fortunes. The moral disease is epidemical ; it is caught by men of all classes, and circumstances. If persons of moderate, and low stations, and incomes issue their orders to their honest, and respectful domesticks in imperious language ;—if they sicken at the unexpected prosperity of a neighbour ; at any distinguishing talent he possesses ; at any little show that he can make in life, by which they may fancy their own importance is diminished ;—if they are quick in taking offence, and slow in admitting reconciliation ; I need not inform you that such people are deeply infected with pride.

That the idea of pride may be limited, and distinctly known ; and that it may not be confounded with a very noble, and respectable quality, I shall endeavour to describe to you a rational, and manly spirit ; which, for the honour of our religion, I should be sorry to think inconsistent with christianity. So unequally are wealth, and power distributed round the world ; and our prejudices are so many, and so strong, that this rational, and manly spirit is too often not very well received even by the sensible, and

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the liberal, from whom it should always meet with a most hospitable reception. Two sorts of men are its declared foes; they never fail to pronounce it pride.—But *their* censure is praise. I mean those who are actually proud themselves; and those who are grossly ignorant.

The man of this generous, and independent mind, pays respect to persons of rank, and to those who are in publick office, in proportion as the office, or the rank is respectable. This he does as a good citizen of the community to which he belongs; from his love of the order, and harmony of society. But he will never prostitute to mere office, or title, the respect of the heart: and when a person of a frank, and open character pays homage to any man, an eye of common discernment will easily perceive whether or no the impulse of his heart animates the form of his homage.

The possessor of a nabob's wealth, considered merely as an enormously rich man, commands no deference from *him*. If he is but a very private gentleman, with a poor income, he will converse with this man of overgrown fortune only on equal terms. He will not punctiliously give him precedence;
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he will not soothe him with one hypocritical smile; he will not assent to every thing he says; he will not listen with a patient ear, and with a face apparently attentive, and anxious, to his fluent insipidity, and accept it for Athenian wit.

Now I am persuaded that the genuine dictates of your hearts bear testimony to the rectitude of this man's conduct. And yet be assured that the rich man, to whom he thus properly behaved, would think him insufferably proud; and in all probability, his friends would think him fit for Bedlam.

A person of the firm, and honourable character which I am describing, behaves to his superiours with an easy, but significant respect; to his equals with a manly, and engaging politeness;—a politeness less directed by the mechanical forms of the world, than by a good heart, and good sense; and to his inferiours with a sincere, and active humanity. It is the sullen pleasure of the proud man to insult, and oppress those who have less power than himself. The man of a rational, and manly spirit could not give pain to the weak, and the helpless, without stabbing his own heart. The pride which God disapproves, cringes to titles,

and enormous wealth. Laudable spirit is most resolute, and inflexible in repelling any attack on its rights, when the invasion is made by formidable power. To this resistance it is urged with uncommon ardour, to guard itself from oppression, to check the dangerous incroachments of the great; and to maintain as far as lies in its power, what should always be sacred, the natural equality of mankind.

Thus, you see, though the characters of the proud man, and the man of a generous, and noble spirit are often confounded by the proud, and by the vulgar, there is the same difference between them that there is between justice, and injustice, courage, and cowardice, vice, and virtue.

I flatter myself that I have now given you a clear idea of pride, and that I have separated that vice from independence, and dignity of mind; which, though calumniated, and denominated pride by the selfish, and the sordid, in whom it excites envy, and awe, is so far from being culpable, that it is highly meritorious, and is equally authorized by reason, and religion.

In the remaining part of my discourse I shall have nothing like difficulty to encounter.—

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ter.—That it is imprudent, absurd, and impious to be proud, I shall endeavour to show by some plain, and obvious considerations. Here there will be no need of elaborate argument, or acute distinction.

The proud man is, of all others, most anxious to be respected; and his conduct directly tends to counteract his aim. By his over-bearing manner he declares a kind of war with the world; and the world, tenacious, and jealous of their liberty, and consequence, are eager to defeat their enemy; seize every opportunity to thwart him, to give him pain, to make him insignificant.

—Do you wish for universal respect? Do you wish that the world may be solicitous, may be expeditious to serve you? Be affable, be courteous; be honestly insinuating to mankind. Obtrude no claim; and generous minds will assert your claims; will make them their own; will enforce them, and give them effect. If the proud man is poor, he should live in a desert. If he is rich, he can only have influence within his own territories; he can only expect assiduity from his vassals, and dependents. If he walks abroad among free-men, and assumes a coercive power over *them*, he will find himself the least of the people. Thus,

of the proud man, even if he is rich, we may say, without great exaggeration, that he lives in a desert. For machines, not men, are his attendants and companions: Fear alienates affection, and prevents the flow of every agreeable, and generous thought. You see, then, by one indisputable instance, that pride is, by no means made for man, a poor, indigent being;—a being, by whom the charms of society are so much, and so justly admired.

When we reflect on the nature of our existence in this world, the absurdity of pride must appear to demonstration. Is it not absurd that an intelligent being should be proud of the importance it derives from any endowment, any acquisition which it possesses in a greater proportion than the generality of mankind, and to which mankind precipitately annex the ideas of honour, and happiness, when it knows that all its importance in this world, must, in a few years, inevitably cease for ever; and that no endowments, no possessions, no dignities will entitle it to eternal consequence, and felicity, except virtue, and piety?

But it is not only death itself that is awful, and mortifying to mortality. The path

to the grave is often horribly noisome, and painful. Let the beauty reflect (however she dislikes reflexion) that in a little time she may be spoiled of her charms for ever, by an unmerciful distemper; and that they may be succeeded by deformity;—that the distemper may be of such a humbling nature as to make her intolerable to her dearest friends;—let her frequently reflect on this momentous truth (and she may frequently reflect on it with little trouble, and to her great advantage), and she will certainly be less arrogant on account of the influence of her charms; she will be less ambitious to extend the triumphs of beauty, and more industrious to cultivate the graces of the mind.

Let the genius reflect (and *he* surely is habituated to reflexion) that his science, his learning, his abilities may be laid in ruins; that he may be reduced to the state of an idiot, by the slow, but certain, and destructive effects which a fever often produces in the mind; or in a moment, by a stroke of the palsy. Such reflexions will certainly cure him of his intellectual pride; if he reads, and thinks, and writes to so little purpose as to harbour any pride. They will

will teach him to respect the lowest peasant, who has but one talent, and uses it well, more than the exalted genius, with his ten talents, who misapplies them; they will teach him to look up with an humble adoration to that God who gives, and who takes away,

I should like to ask the *rich* proud man (for certainly *he* deserves no quarter) when he is tortured with the gout or stone; those blessed effects of his wealth;—when perhaps he would gladly change conditions with the meanest of his domesticks;—I should like to ask *him*, if he thinks it will become him, when he has recovered from the agonizing fit, to put on the supercilious look, to issue his orders magisterially, to treat the poor as if they were a species of animals infinitely beneath him; to imagine himself a lord of the creation?

Of the impiety, as well as the absurdity of pride, we receive a striking evidence, when we consider the magnificence, and infinity of the works of God, and our own comparative insignificance. Can man, in a serene, still night, contemplate the starry Heavens, with such thoughts as naturally arise in his mind, on taking such a prospect;
and

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and dares he still be proud? It is the opinion of the great Newton, that though light passes on with incredible swiftness, there are stars whose rays have not yet shot down to our globe since the time of the creation. What an awful idea does this give us of space, and of the works of the Deity! What atoms must *we* appear, when we contrast this thought with the proper idea of ourselves! After such a speculation, can we look big, and chase, and bluster on the temporary stage of our nether world?—"The heavens declare the glory of God (says "David) and the firmament sheweth his "handy-work."—Would it not then be highly ridiculous, if it was not dreadfully impious, in *us*; to take such an enormous measure of our own consequence, and to act in so preposterous a manner as if the glory of God was principally declared in *our* formation?—as if the creation of *man* was the greatest work of the Supreme Being; the *effort* of omnipotence?

But it may not be improper to come nearer home; to take a view of the planets; which, with our earth, enjoy one common sun. Our earth is a solid body; and they, too, are solid bodies; two of them
are

are prodigiously greater than our earth. What I would infer, is, that as we see no waste of space here below; as every hillock, as every leaf teems with living creatures, we need not doubt that the planets are inhabited; and it is very probable that in some of them, perhaps in the largest planets, the rational inhabitants are infinitely our superiours both in body, and in mind. Our strength, our capacity, and our knowledge may be to *theirs*, the strength, the capacity, and the knowledge of a child. I believe you will allow that this is not a chimerical supposition; and that it should humble the pride of man.

The contemplation of the glorious and stupendous luminaries of heaven often inspired the royal psalmist with a pious humility. I shall give you his own words; as they are more emphatical and edifying than any thing I can add on the present sublime subject.—“When I consider thy Heavens, the works of thy fingers; the moon, and the stars which thou hast ordained;—what is man, that thou art mindful of him; and the son of man, that thou so regardest him!”

I have

DISCOURSE III. 93

I have not presumed, through this discourse, that you knew not the impropriety, the criminality of pride, in a social, a moral, and a religious being. I only flatter myself that the descriptions, and the arguments which I have offered, will arm you with a most punctilious caution against this absurd, imprudent, and impious vice ;— that they will excite your noble emulation to be the reverse of those who act as if *pride was made for man*.

DISCOURSE

DISCOURAGEMENT

The first of these is the feeling of
being alone in the world. This is
often the result of a lack of
contact with other people. It is
a feeling of isolation and
loneliness. It is a feeling of
being cut off from the world.
It is a feeling of being
ununderstood and unloved.
It is a feeling of being
rejected and abandoned.
It is a feeling of being
lost and forgotten.

DISCOURAGEMENT

DISCOURSE IV.

Preached on Board of His Majesty's Ship,
RESOLUTION.

DISCOVERIES

THE HISTORY OF THE
DISCOVERIES

Advertisement.

AFTER I had composed this discourse, I divided it into three parts, which were preached, on three Sundays, on board of the Resolution. I must observe to those readers who may think some of its passages not adapted to the comprehension of illiterate men, that I have inculcated their duties to my audience as perspicuously as I could, both in argument, and language; and that the discourse was delivered before officers of a liberal education.

Advertisement

THESE I had composed this little
book, I divided it into three parts,
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DISCOURSE IV.

The 1st Ep. of St. PET. Ch. V. Part of ver. 8.

Be sober ; be vigilant —

IN every kingdom, in every government, there must be different ranks, or stations of men ; and men must be differently employed. Otherwise no kingdom, no government could long subsist. In a state of society, the lowest professions are as necessary as the highest. And kings would maintain but a melancholy, dreary sway over lands of famine, were not their subjects supported by the labours of the peasant.

In a civilized community we are all dependent on one another. I speak not, my free-born Britons, of a slavish dependence ; of that dependence in which lawless will commands, and abject fear obeys ;—of that dependence which resembles confusion more than order.—No—I speak of that dependence from which universal welfare springs ; which only dictates, or insists on our con-

stant exchange of good offices ; and which makes every good office that we are to do to others, an act that immediately contributes to our own interest. In short, in every civilized community, there is a fine, I was going to say, a magical chain, combining, or connecting all below, and all above.

If the grandees of the world were not intoxicated with power, and parade, they would certainly thus reflect on the nature of society, and demean themselves accordingly. They would make the chain which I have just mentioned, a chain of universal love. They would exercise their superiority over others, not only with justice, but with tenderness, and generosity. They would treat their fellow-subjects as their brethren. They would respect the lowest mechanic—Him whose simple, but useful art defends their feet from cold, and wet.—They would respect those workmen whose hands cast the cannon, which are the terror of our neighbouring enemy ; a people, who, with the specious appearance of politeness, and humanity, are most profligate in manners, and most tyrannical in disposition.—But still more would they respect the British sailors, the bravest men upon earth ; who are the
chosen

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chosen instruments of providence to chastise *those enemies* ; whose firm, and fearless hands, give, as one may say, *those cannon* life, and let loose their thunder.

Before I speak particularly to my text, to what intimately concerns your temporal, and eternal welfare, I must beg your attention a little longer to a few words on subordination, or a difference of ranks in a state of society ;—and on a peculiar blessing which you enjoy, as members of the British constitution.

That great, and indispensable rule in civil government, by which one man must move at the will of another, by which few must command, and many must obey, is more rigidly necessary in an army, or a fleet, than in any other collection of men. For in an army or a fleet, there must be no delay, no jarring wills, and actions: orders must be given at an exact time, and they must be obeyed with expedition and punctuality. All the parts of the great, collective body must move as uniformly, as harmoniously as those of a clock, or a watch—more swiftly, indeed, than most of the movements of those machines. When these regulations are not

observed, what can be the consequences but confusion, and destruction?

As you know then that human nature is apt to err, is apt grievously to offend (I wish you knew it less by fatal experience) you will not wonder that severe laws have been enacted, and are put in execution, to maintain all this necessary alacrity, and fidelity of obedience.

You enjoy a peculiar blessing in being the subjects of a country which is often styled, with just distinction, the land of laws, and of liberty. You are not excluded from the protection of those laws by being sailors. You may boldly appeal to them when you are injured; at their tribunal you may vindicate your rights, and privileges as Englishmen; and your just, and equitable treatment as English mariners. But I would not have you out of love with the martial laws by which you are immediately governed. They inherit the spirit, they speak in the tone of the general English laws, from which they sprung. It is plain, from their whole tenour, which is just, and equal, that they who framed them, were conscious that they were giving laws to the sons of liberty. They were instituted by men who had long experienced,

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perienced, and were thoroughly sensible of the happy effects of a fair administration of justice;—by men who were convinced, that mildness, and humanity, whenever they can be exercised, are the best policy. Rigid and severe, indeed, these laws often are; but that their rigour, and severity are founded on necessity, I need not attempt to prove, after what I have said concerning the nature of the naval service. They are not unreasonably, capriciously, and wantonly severe: their strictness, and their punishment are always judiciously proportioned to the exigency of the case, to the degree of the offence, and to the importance of example.

Compare the punishments inflicted on board of Dutch men of war with those of the English navy; and you will find that the latter have been dictated by a civilized, and humane people;—the former by a set of trading, insensible barbarians. A person endowed with any sensibility cannot be informed of the English naval punishments without extreme sympathy, and pain:—but an account of those of Holland fill the mind of the hearer with horror, and agony.—What humanity, indeed, is to be expected from a phlegmatic, and gloomy

nation, who are almost destitute of sentiment, and therefore must be very weakly impressed by benevolence;—whose cold, and flinty souls, barren of every liberal shoot, are fertile of the tares of the world, are over-run with the weeds of avarice;—whose attention is engrossed by figures, the paltry signs of traffick:—whose ultimate object is gain;—who are continually *worshipping the golden image which* their commerce hath set up?

Though my excursion from my principal subject may already appear too long, I cannot help remarking here, to make you more in love with your native country, that our kingdom is more friendly to the rights of man than Holland; and yet Holland is one of the best-constituted republics of modern times. Now in a Republick, or Commonwealth, the people, the equals of the lowest citizen are supposed to have a greater share in political administration, and in the distribution of civil justice than in any other form of government. Consequently, it might be expected, that in commonwealths there would be the least oppression;—that equity, in them, would smile alike, on the cottage, and the villa.

But

But this, unfortunately, is far from the truth. In most of those European states, to which the old, and venerable name of Republick is grossly misapplied, the people are totally governed, or rather enslaved by the rich, and the noble. They only differ, in their political situation, from the subjects of the Sultan, by having many tyrants instead of one. A modern Republick is like a modern patriot: they both amuse, and delude you with a sound. I can assure you, from the most respectable, and indisputable authorities, that there is not a government upon earth, in which the natural, and civil rights of mankind have so free a scope, or are so equally, and vigorously protected, as in the limited monarchy of Great Britain. The theme is pleasing to an Englishman; permit me to close it with a piece of private history.

There lived not long ago, an illustrious Frenchman (it is worth observing that he was a Frenchman) who was one of the best, and greatest men that Europe ever saw. He had none of the levity, and superficiality of his countrymen; for he reasoned, and he thought. He made very large allowances of merit to other countries as well

well as to France: in this particular, too, he was quite the reverse of a Frenchman. It is difficult to determine whether his natural abilities, or his acquired knowledge were greater: they were both superlatively great. He dedicated the greater part of his life to the study of history, and politicks. No philosopher ever knew mankind better than he; or was more conversant in the various laws by which they are governed throughout the world. This extraordinary Frenchman was likewise thoroughly sensible of the dignity of human nature: therefore he loved liberty, and abhorred slavery. He was not satisfied with the information which is drawn from books; he left his native country; and resided for a considerable time in each of the other principal parts of Europe, to complete his knowledge of the manners of mankind, and of policy.—He had profoundly studied, and warmly admired the English constitution, before he sailed for England. As soon as he landed on the shore of Dover, he laid his hand upon his heart, with a manly, with a noble enthusiasm, and said to those around him—“Je respire”—“I breathe.”—How comprehensive, how expressive, how emphatical were these two words from that

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enlightened, and amiable sage!—As if he had said,—“ I have at length touched the
 “ ground which I had long hallowed in my
 “ imagination. This country is the fa-
 “ vourite abode of freedom, and therefore,
 “ the properest abode of man. Here we
 “ have the true, and unrivalled model of
 “ judicious, humane, and salutary policy;—
 “ a model far excelling the celebrated states
 “ of Greece, and the glorious Common-
 “ wealth of Rome.—If there had not been
 “ a British constitution upon earth, I should
 “ have ardently wished that such a form of
 “ government had somewhere existed, for
 “ the honour of humanity.—In this happy
 “ island the very air seems to play more
 “ freely than that of the continent.—Li-
 “ berty seems to wanton in every gale.”

In the sequel of my discourse, I shall take my thoughts from my text, and address myself particularly to *you*, the honest seamen who are before me. And I flatter myself that you will understand me so clearly, and be so well convinced of the truth of what I shall offer, that it will contribute to remove those bad habits, which are the only, though, God knows, the sufficient causes of all your misery. I shall speak very openly to you,
 very

very roundly. Important truth should never be half-told. But do me the justice to be assured that not a word shall proceed from a love of dictating, from the pride of authority, which too much prevails in some of our spiritual teachers. As humility should be one of the essential characteristicks of a clergyman, I hope if bluntness be upon my tongue, candour will be in my heart. While I endeavour to give you good advice, I shall not forget that I am a man—a frail man; subject to infirmity, and to vice, like yourselves.—I am your fellow-subject, and your fellow-christian; therefore I feel myself your sincere, and ardent friend.

In a foregoing part of my discourse I vindicated the rigour of the naval discipline by showing that it was necessary. One strong, and decisive reason for that rigour I then omitted, which I shall now mention with regret. The laws of the navy are calculated to restrain men of imprudent, thoughtless, and profligate lives.—Men, who, as they neglect the duties of eternal obligation, must be very apt to neglect the duties of their calling—Men, who spurning the sacred privilege of being governed by reason, and religion, can only be kept in order, like

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mere animals, by what they immediately feel, or fear.

Would you then be thoroughly reconciled to the laws that rule you? Would you be infallibly, and most agreeably convinced of what I have endeavoured to prove to you, that they are just, and equitable?—Amend your conduct; change it altogether. Be punctually obedient to those whom Providence hath set over you. Never be at peace with yourselves till you have acquired the habits of temperance, chastity, and œconomy; till you have brought all your tumultuous, and unruly passions into subjection; in short, till you are virtuous men. Learn neither to despise, nor to dread religion, as a bugbear. There is nothing gloomy, nothing melancholy, nothing terrible in religion, to sensible, and well-disposed minds: on the contrary,—*Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.*—Prov. ch. III. v. 17. She desires, she intreats, that you would suffer her to be your friend. If you would be so kind to yourselves as to associate with her, you would avoid many, and great evils. You would not lavish your money, which you earn very hardly; you would not ruin
your

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your constitutions, on publicans, and prostitutes ; you would not be robbed ; you would not be murdered by them ;—Those wretches whom you should shun, as you would fly from a plague ;—those vultures, who despite you, while they fleece you ; who, if you were perishing with hunger, would not have gratitude, would not have charity enough, to give you a morsel of bread. Then you would not lose your character ; your goodname ; which is one of the most valuable of human possessions to men in all stations. —You would escape those ignominious punishments, that should gall the spirit, the soul of a brave Englishman, more than his body.

Such are the evils which you would avoid, by being virtuous, or truly religious. The good consequences which attend a strict moral conduct, are so beneficial, and so striking, that one would imagine, they might rouse to reflection, and incite to reformation, the most abandoned profligate, who had not lost his senses. If you would be so wise, and persevering as to adopt this conduct, your lives would not only be secure, but happy. You would reap more advantages from your profession than are obtained by most men
who

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who are obliged to work for their bread. You would be supplied with the necessaries, with the real conveniences of life. And if we are good men, what signifies any thing more? Believe me, the luxury and splendour of the world, are mere trifles: nay, they are worse than trifles: they are oftener the causes of pain than of pleasure—*Be sober, be vigilant*, says my text, By the word, *sober*, the apostle not only means, that we should abstain from drunkenness; but that our whole behaviour, and conduct should be sober; i. e. decent, and orderly.—By directing us to be *vigilant*, He bids us be vigilant, or watchful over ourselves, not to fail in the performance of our christian duties.—And in the duties of every christian are undoubtedly included the duties of his particular calling. Now, if a private seaman discharges all his duties punctually, and faithfully; i. e.—if he acquits himself with honesty, sobriety, regularity, and diligence, he may, in his humble station, be as happy a man as his commander, or his king.

Providence is extremely benevolent, and impartial to man. Those objects which are most essential to our welfare, and happiness, are the least expensive; nay, many of them
cost

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cost us nothing. Virtue, which makes the acquisition of every thing that is worth desiring, easy to us, is obtained without money. In our pursuit of her we are gainers; and when we are possessed of her, by her we are taught the exactest, and best œconomy. She teaches us to steer in the happy middle course, betwixt avarice, and profusion.—She teaches us not to value money for its own sake, but for the sake of the necessaries and conveniences which it procures to ourselves, and others.—She trains us, at the same time, to a most rigid prudence, and a most liberal generosity. Could I but persuade you to be so kind to your interest as to determine to be virtuous men, you would wonder in the space of a twelvemonth, to find yourselves rich. Far be it from me to mock you:—I mean, rich, in comparison with the circumstances in which most of you constantly are; I mean, rich, in your stations. You would soon have wherewithal to keep you in cleanliness, and neatness; two very desirable, comfortable, and creditable blessings, of which you are extremely negligent—you, who are, in general, never decent in your apparel, but by compulsion—you, over whom your superiours are obliged to

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to watch, as if you were children, to preserve you from rags, and nakedness. You would have money enough to cloath yourselves completely; to make you appear like yourselves at all times. And if you knew of what consequence you are to your countrymen, you would take a pride in dressing well; in dressing as becomes you.—The sight of a clean, neat, well-rigged sailor, pleases the heart of every true Englishman—makes it leap for joy. You would likewise have it in your power, now and then, to drink a cheerful, and temperate glass with your messmate, or old acquaintance. Your present enjoyment would be heightened by talking over your past difficulties, and dangers; and it would be infinitely greater while conscience bore her testimony of your good conduct, and while reason was not dethroned by excess. Would I presume to restrain *you* from well-timed relaxation, and mirth, who undergo so many hardships, who expose yourselves to so many hazards for the publick? *You* who boldly encounter the most painful toils, the worst climates, and the most formidable enemies?—Would I presume to restrain *you* from well-timed relaxation, and mirth?—Heaven forbid!—

I

Religion

Religion permits us; religion commands us, to enjoy every innocent pleasure. It has nothing in it, churlish, and severe. If it *had*, no unprejudiced, and sensible person would believe that it came from God—from the mild, and beneficent Father of the universe, who hath so amply provided for the happiness of all his creatures.—Pleasure is not forbidden us by religion; but intemperate, licentious pleasure. And why is it forbidden?—Surely from the motive of a wise, and tender parent: because in the end, it proves our torment and destruction.

If you would be prevailed with to lead the virtuous, and prudent life which I am inculcating, it would not merely enable you to provide for yourselves; you would have something to spare to your relations. Those of you who have wives, and families, might sometimes assist their industry, and cheer their hearts, with a welcome present, or remittance. Twenty shillings, to people in poor circumstances, is a great relief. And such a sum, if you were sober, and frugal, you might, now and then, afford. Remember what the Apostle remarks, like a true disciple of his humane master, who commanded his followers, *if they loved him,*

to

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to keep his benevolent commandments—not merely to believe, but also to practise.—If (says St. Paul) any provide not for his own; and specially for those of his own house; he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.—1st of Tim. chap. V. ver. 8.

If you have neither wife, nor child, you may have a sister who is entitled to your liberality;—a virtuous, and industrious sister, labouring for three or four pounds a year. Perhaps you are the only friend she has in the world; perhaps you are her father, her mother, and her brother. The little supplies that your œconomy would enable you to send her from time to time, might have great, and salutary effects; they might save her honesty, they might save her honour from temptation.

If you have not a sister, you may have a hoary parent, a poor woman, who is a widow; and who in the days of her youth, and strength, reared your helpless infancy, with all the fondness, and anxiety of a mother. But she is now bent with age, and infirmity, and shivering with poverty. One virtue is a handmaid to another. Your good management of your little finances would put it into your power to enjoy one of the purest

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pleasures, one of the noblest transports of which human nature is susceptible;—I mean, the feeling of the soul in relieving such a venerable, such a friendless object as *this*! Could you but once afford to be charitable, in consequence of your good conduct, I should not doubt that you would discharge the duties of humanity which I have now recommended. For the men of your profession who are not absolutely hardened in wickedness, are noted for a peculiar frankness, and generosity of disposition. If I have censured your vices, let me do justice to your virtues.

I hope you are convinced, from your natural sentiments of right, and wrong, that what I have said against vice, and in favour of virtue, is indisputably true. We shall find, then, in summing up our moral account, that if you continue in vice, you must suffer its infallible consequences, wretchedness, infamy, and ruin. But if you assert the glorious privileges of men, and of christians; if you conquer your passions, and all your bad habits; if you lead a life agreeable to the laws of reason, and religion; you will enjoy the certain fruits of your happy reformation; you will enjoy
health,

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health, competence, and reputation; you will have opportunities of gratifying your best affections: you will be loved, you will be respected by your officers, and by mankind. —To practise the virtues which produce all these good effects, is the essence of christianity. Therefore, however you may blaspheme religion, in your hours of levity, and riot, as a morose, and capricious tyrant, exacting an unreasonable service from mankind;—will you not now agree with me, that she is our most valuable friend, and most agreeable companion?

“ Learn neither to despise, nor to dread “ religion as a bugbear.” This caution I gave you in a preceding part of my discourse. I hope you are now satisfied that religion is so far from being contemptible, that it is entitled to our sincerest respect, to our profoundest veneration. And if you have fortitude enough to put in practice the plan of conduct which I have here proposed, you will never think of religion with terrour, but always with that *perfect love* which *casteth out fear*. You will find it the most attractive, the most amiable, the most pleasurable object you can contemplate. I should be happy to protract my sermon to an unreasonable

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reasonable length in enumerating your good qualities. You have some excellent, some noble properties; and for one, which I am going to mention, you deserve high commendation.

I have never observed, in any congregations, more attention to divine service, more propriety, and decorum of behaviour, than in those on board our ships of war. When you are assembled to worship God, you demean yourselves as if you were sensible of the important, of the great duty in which you are then engaged: and you seem to pay him the homage which He requires of his reasonable creatures; the homage of sincere adoration, and pious gratitude. To say, that your devotion *seems* to be thus unaffected, and rational, implies an unfair suspicion. I have often watched you with an examining eye when you have been called together to pay your Sunday's tribute to your Maker; and I have always had the pleasure to infer from my examination, that your attention was fixed to the duty of the day. When men unpractised in the deceitful arts of the world, attempt to act a part, they may soon be detected by common penetration. Therefore I verily believe that your
 hearts

hearts correspond with your manner. I believe that you are wholly impressed, on these solemn occasions, with a reverence which does honour to human nature; and that you are not merely awed by the presence of your superiour officers.

This merit, then, being fully allowed you, I would propose you, in this instance, as models of an humble, composed, and collected piety, to many of our congregations on land; to many persons on whom all the advantages of education have been ill bestowed; and who ought to be examples, in morality, and religion, to the simpler part of mankind;—To many, who, however well-informed they may think their minds, and however chastised their manners, inconsiderately, and profanely frequent our churches, with an indifference, impertinence, and licentiousness, fitter for the theatre of a contemptible Italian opera, than for the sanctuary of God.

The sincerity of your worship, the proper sense of your dependence on your Maker, is a good foundation for the fair superstructure of practical religion, of universal virtue. We are told, by David, and Solomon—That

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wis-

dom. Pſal. cxi. ver. 10. Prov. ix. ver. 10.—
 But what adds David?—*A good understanding have all they that do his commandments.*—
 i. e. The beginning, the firſt part, the rudiments, or elements of true wiſdom, are, to believe that a GOD exiſts; and to revere, and adore Him. But the proof that we have worthy apprehenſions of the deity; the proof of a good underſtanding of religion, and, indeed, of a good underſtanding in general, is, to perform the moral duties which religion inculcates to mankind.

Moſt earneſtly do I wiſh that the fear of the Lord, by which, I admit that you are influenced on certain occaſions, was the beginning of wiſdom in your minds, according to the common acceptation of the word, *Beginning*:—I wiſh that it uſually excited you to a correſpondent conduct.—But are you not ſtrangely inconfiſtent; are you not impious beyond expreſſion—you, who with all your religious fears, not only take the ſacred name of God in vain, every day, every hour, every minute, but join to it the moſt dreadful imprecations, the moſt horrid, and deteſtable ideas? To invent oaths rather more tremendous, and ſhocking than any in uſe before, paſſes with you for ability,
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and wit;—Oaths, at which the daring profligate startles, when he first hears them, and hesitates whether he should condemn, or applaud them.

All degrees of cursing and swearing argue so stupid, and abject a mind, that they are totally excluded from polite conversation. They are extremely offensive to all well-bred people, to whom the epithet, *well-bred*, is rather too liberally applied, and by an abuse of language: for many of them are neither influenced by religion, or morality. So despicable, and odious is the habit of cursing and swearing in its own nature; when it is abstracted from superiour considerations.

But I do not want to make polite men of you. I wish you to be honest sailors, under the government of religion. Therefore I must inform you that the practice of cursing and swearing is highly displeasing to God, and to every good man, both because it is extremely impious, and because you are not guilty of it from any temptation. It supplies none of your wants, it gratifies none of your senses. If oaths and execrations are musick to your ears, you will not think me abusive when I observe that they must be the musick of Savages. No
wild

wild American, no barbarous Hottentot, can be soothed with sounds more uncouth, and frightful. In short, he who habituates himself to cursing and swearing, can plead no propensity in his favour but a propensity truly diabolical; that of loving wickedness for the sake of wickedness.

How am I to account for your inconsistency towards your God?—for your worshipping of Him with humility, and piety to-day, and for your blaspheming of Him to-morrow? The inconsistency is great, but not unsolvable. You suffer yourselves, as I told you before, to become almost irrational animals. You have no fixed principles: for you do not exercise your reason. You are actuated merely by the impulse of the present moment, by the objects that immediately surround you. A summons to public worship; the gravity with which you see it administered; the simple, but sublime, and affecting liturgy of the Church of England, excite, and keep alive in you for a while, the idea of a supreme Being, and of his awful majesty. But let the scene be changed ever so soon; and that guardian-idea of all virtue is instantaneously suppressed. Let but a slight temptation to vice fall

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fall in your way, and your transient piety is immediately superseded by most unworthy successors; by profaneness, and debauchery.—In short, you communicate very little with reason—with reason; who, if we consult her honestly, and seriously, shows us the excellence of religion; and confirms us in a uniform obedience to religious precepts. Your small share of morals and piety, is owing to the happiness of disposition; to good natural sentiment. Your numerous, and habitual vices proceed from your inconsiderate indulgence of sense, and passion. The word, *conduct*, as it signifies a settled mode of action, which we adopt from a previous, and regular plan, is hardly ever applicable, in its good, or bad sense, to *your* lives.

But still you are men; you are endowed with the faculty of reason; and you may exert it, if you will. You may likewise be enlightened, if you will, by the gospel of truth. These powerful aids cooperating with your vigorous, and persevering resolution, you may eradicate all your vices, and plant every virtue in their stead. Let us then exchange our melancholy views for a cheering, and noble prospect, which I shewed you before, but not completely.

In a former passage I proposed a reformation of your manners, as infallible means to reconcile you to the laws of the navy, to convince you that they are just, and equitable. And such would, undoubtedly, be the consequences of your good conduct. It is with you, and the naval discipline, as it is with infidels, and religion. They endeavour to persuade themselves and the world that religion is false, because it prohibits the sordid gratification of their favourite passions.— They are offended with a system which condemns themselves, which exacts from its followers, purity of heart, and rectitude of manners. So *you* detest the laws to which you are subject; because you often incur their severe, but just, and necessary punishments. But if you were prudent, and virtuous men, you would highly approve these laws. As you would not suffer by the rigour of their sentences, you would soon be satisfied that they are not enemies to men, but to vices: nay that they are friends to men; that if their application is harsh, their effect is beneficial to the criminal; for they restrain him from those practices which are the bane of his interest, and happiness. But when you have once made the practice
of

of virtue habitual ; when it is easy to you, when you can give it all its force ; it will operate more powerfully, and extensively in your favour than perhaps you yet imagine. It will not merely convince you that your laws are equitable ; it will raise you to a situation in which you will not need to envy the greatest potentate upon earth ; to a situation in which you will enjoy the true dignity of human nature. Men are naturally fond of liberty, but especially Englishmen, on whom that inestimable blessing sheds its most genial influence. Now virtue exalts us to the noblest liberty ; to moral independence, to the highest, the happiest, and the most honorable independence we are capable of attaining. In this state of independence, we enjoy health ; our wants are few ; and if we are not born to a fortune, we cheerfully exert industry, which amply supplies them :—Industry, which is so far from being mean, abject, and servile, that it is most worthy of man, and most friendly to his best dispositions. It provides not only for his body, but also for his ethereal principle. It keeps the mind vigorous, and active, in full health, and spirits ; in that lively, and animated tone, which makes us feel, and take pleasure in existence. It prevents the slow, but horrible

ble invasion of langour, and melancholy. It excludes idleness, that sleepy inmate of the soul, which lets in upon us the tyrant, vice, and consigns us to perpetual slavery.

In this manly state of independence, the world will have no painful, no disagreeable hold of you.—You will not be indebted to it for any thing. It is an ungenerous world; and you will not be obliged to supplicate its favours. It will give you food and raiment, indeed; but you will give it your labour, which is equivalent. And your labour will not be extorted from you.—You will not act like the slaves on the coast of Barbary, who ply the oar by compulsion; but you will act like intelligent, and free Beings: You will assiduously contribute to the welfare of society, in the circle of your station, from a rational sense of your duty to your Creator, and to yourselves:—to your Creator, as faithful stewards of the talent which he has committed to your trust;—to yourselves, as truly prudent, and wise men, who are determined not to be exposed to want, nor to be guilty of villainy, or meanness—who are determined not to be reduced to the humiliating necessity of soliciting the cold charity of mankind for your daily sustenance;

—of

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—of imploring them to avert *any* formidable evil, or to confer *any* substantial good;—as well-knowing that their *tender mercies are cruel*.

While you are thus diligent, healthy, and cheerful, your peace of mind will not be broken by any selfish, and mean passions. You will not be tormented by chagrin, malevolence, and envy: You will not harbour any antipathy against mankind. For they will not hurt you. They feel no inclination to hurt the prudent, and virtuous man. And you will not be hurt with their prosperity, and grandeur, the want of which you will not regret; as virtue is satisfied, is happy with few, and simple accommodations. Nay, you will embrace every opportunity of doing good to mankind; not only in obedience to a precept of christianity, which commands us *to love our neighbours as ourselves*; but likewise from that complacency of mind; from that universal benevolence of disposition, which is a natural consequence of the pure, and complete self-enjoyment that results from a consciousness of acting well, of *aquitting ourselves*, in our moral capacities, *like men*. For when we are most pleased

pleased with ourselves, we are most inclined to procure pleasure for others.

Such is the conduct, and such is the state of the truly independent man. And if you model your lives by the rules of virtue, or true religion; by *the perfect law of liberty*; [James, ch. i. ver. 25.] *and if you stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free*; [Galat. ch. v. ver. 1.] this independence you will obtain, and enjoy as long as you live. In moral excellence, which is the most valuable excellence, you will not have your superiours in the world. I cannot say more in recommendation of the conduct which I have been describing; I cannot say more to its honour, than by observing that it makes us resemble God, as far as the limited powers of man can adopt a similitude of his Creator. I am not inconsiderately, and profanely insensible that our best actions are weak, and circumscribed; and that as the attributes of the deity are infinite, they are very faintly, and inadequately expressed by our highest terms of praise, those of *excellence*, and *perfection*. Yet surely the epithet, *divine*, may, to a certain degree, in the strict language of philosophy, and without the exaggeration of poetical encomium,

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comium, be applied to the man, whose victorious fortitude, and confirmed habits, have exalted him to a moral independence; —to the man who is only dependent on the supreme Being: on that Being, *whose service is perfect freedom*: to the man, who, though He is happy in, and from, Himself, though He is not obliged to others, is assiduous to promote their happiness;—who cherishes the spirit of universal benevolence;—who regulates, and governs the tenour of his thoughts, words, and actions, by the dictates of *pure, and eternal reason*.

Perhaps you expect that I will advise you how to subdue your passions; how to get rid of your bad habits; how to acquire this god-like temper of soul.—My advice to you shall be short; it is not needful that it should be long. And it is well when important counsel can be couched in a few words; for, on that account, it is the more easily remembered.

Reflect seriously on the substance of this discourse after you have heard it: on the natural, and necessary tendencies of virtue, and of vice; on the amiableness, and advantages of the one; and on the deformity, and disadvantages of the other. I

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know that the reason; I know that the feelings with which God has endowed you, will convince you of the truth of all that I have recommended to your consideration, and practice. If they *do*, form a sacred, and firm resolution to lead a Christian life. Resolutions hastily made, in a fit of caprice, or passion, are often bad. Or if they are good, their effects are often transitory. But the resolutions that we assume from an exercise of right reason, must always be good; and we may hope that their consequences will be durable; that they will influence our lives. Never think of quitting your vices by degrees: it is an injudicious, and in general, an ineffectual method of reformation. It tantalizes the moral patient; it keeps him in a lingering torment; and after all, it seldom brings him health, and vigour of soul.—Every repetition of a bad practice makes the cure of it more difficult; makes *your work and labour* of virtue always to begin, with an additional disadvantage. The wound of the mind, like a wound of the body, is exasperated by this improper treatment. Strike out of your manners, by a *fearless, great resolve*, once for all, every thing that is excess;

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excess; every thing that is vice. And as we pray *not to be led into temptation, but to be delivered from evil*, whenever you feel a propensity to any kind of wickedness arising in your mind, suppress it by an immediate, and short act of reason; kill it instantaneously in its birth. Do not debate with it, do not parley with it for a moment: the man who deliberates, is lost. And whenever you find yourselves allured by external objects to any intemperance, to any unlawful gratification, quit those objects without hesitation. For the least hesitation will be more than dangerous: it will be decisive against your virtue.—Your publick enemies, the enemies of your country, you conquer by a behaviour which redounds to your honour, to your glory; by facing them with all their force, and standing resolutely to your quarters. But if you would triumph over your private enemies, over your vices, you must act in a different, in a contrary manner. In your warfare against *them*, you must relax from the high British tone: you must adopt the calmer maxim of Augustus Cæsar, who, not with the spirit of an old Roman, used to say, “that the wary soldier was “better than the brave.”—For in this war-

fare, you can only gain a superiority, you can only gain a complete victory, like Augustus, by prevention, or like the Parthians, by flight.—And by this plan of moral operation, however cautious, however timid it may appear, you will not sink, but you will rise in your character, as heroes.—To extinguish the first warmth of our irregular passions, and to fly from those objects by which we feel they are enflamed, as it is, I fear, the rarest, is, undoubtedly the greatest, and most glorious fortitude.

Indeed a truly virtuous, or Christian conduct is now so rare, and is esteemed so difficult to be acquired; that the ministry of the gospel, is, in the opinion of this age, a superfluous profession; and is not only despised and ridiculed by those whose minds are engrossed by the fashionable follies, and profligacy of the times; but is thought of little consequence even by many decent, and grave men, because they think it does not reach its aim; does not influence our hearts and manners. And I am well aware that any moral, and religious attempt to reclaim the lives of seamen, whose case, with regard to reformation, is generally pronounced desperate, and incurable, may be
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made an ample field for raillery, by the coxcomb, and the wit.

To what I have now premised I shall answer, that these objections to the Christian religion, and its ministry, are both uncharitable, and unjust. There are many *left in our Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal*, [1 Kings xix. 18.]—many, who are so far from being infected with the contagion of a licentious age, that they may be truly styled, virtuous, and pious men—many, with respect to absolute number; though few, it must be owned, comparatively with *those who name the name of Christ, and yet do not depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. ch. ii. ver. 19. But that a virtuous man *is, in the sight of God, of great price*, may be proved by a remarkable passage of scripture, in which we are informed that HE would not have destroyed the unnatural, and monstrous inhabitants of Sodom, if their city had contained ten righteous persons, Gen. ch. xviii. ver. 32.—Therefore we may insist, from better authority than that of ignorant praters, or mistaken reasoners, that the propagation of the gospel hath produced effects worthy of its Divine Authour; since it hath diffused a celestial morality, which

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has constituted the happiness of many rational, and immortal beings in many ages of the world.

And why may not I flatter myself that the doctrine which I have now inculcated, and which, I hope, is exactly consonant with the rules of Christianity, will not be lost upon *you*? For you are men; you have the use of reason; therefore you cannot be dead to a sense of right and wrong. That sense may be strengthened, may be thrown into action, even by *my* endeavours; however deficient I may be in the art of honest persuasion. Great effects are often derived from first causes, which, in appearance, are trivial. There are certain happy junctures on which not only our fortunes, but, what is of much more consequence, our morals, depend. The human mind, unless it is fixed by principles, is a various, a volatile being. A man of a dissolute life, may be so agitated by turbulent passions, may be so engrossed by sensual pleasures, to-day, that he will be totally impatient of good advice. To-morrow he may view the world, and its delusive objects through the medium of reason; he may earnestly wish to be virtuous; and therefore he may be well-

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well-disposed to receive moral instruction. Besides we all differ from each other in the original constitution, and in the habitual turn, and direction of our minds. Nay the mind of one man will differ so extremely from that of another, that you are only warranted to pronounce them of the same species by their external forms.

Hence it is evident, that if I am in a proper temper to lend a patient ear to the culture of the soul, I may be won, I may be determined to the practice of virtue, by the simple arguments, and humble eloquence of one man, though I should be but slightly impressed by the superiour energy of another. The reasoning of the former may be more adapted to my capacity, and his oratory may be more congenial with my sentiments. He may introduce well-known, but important truths to my understanding, in a manner peculiarly pleasing to my imagination.

Let me therefore hope that some of you *have heard me at a convenient season*: that some of you have favoured me with your attention; have comprehended, have felt, have approved what I have said; and will resolve to act agreeably to your feelings,

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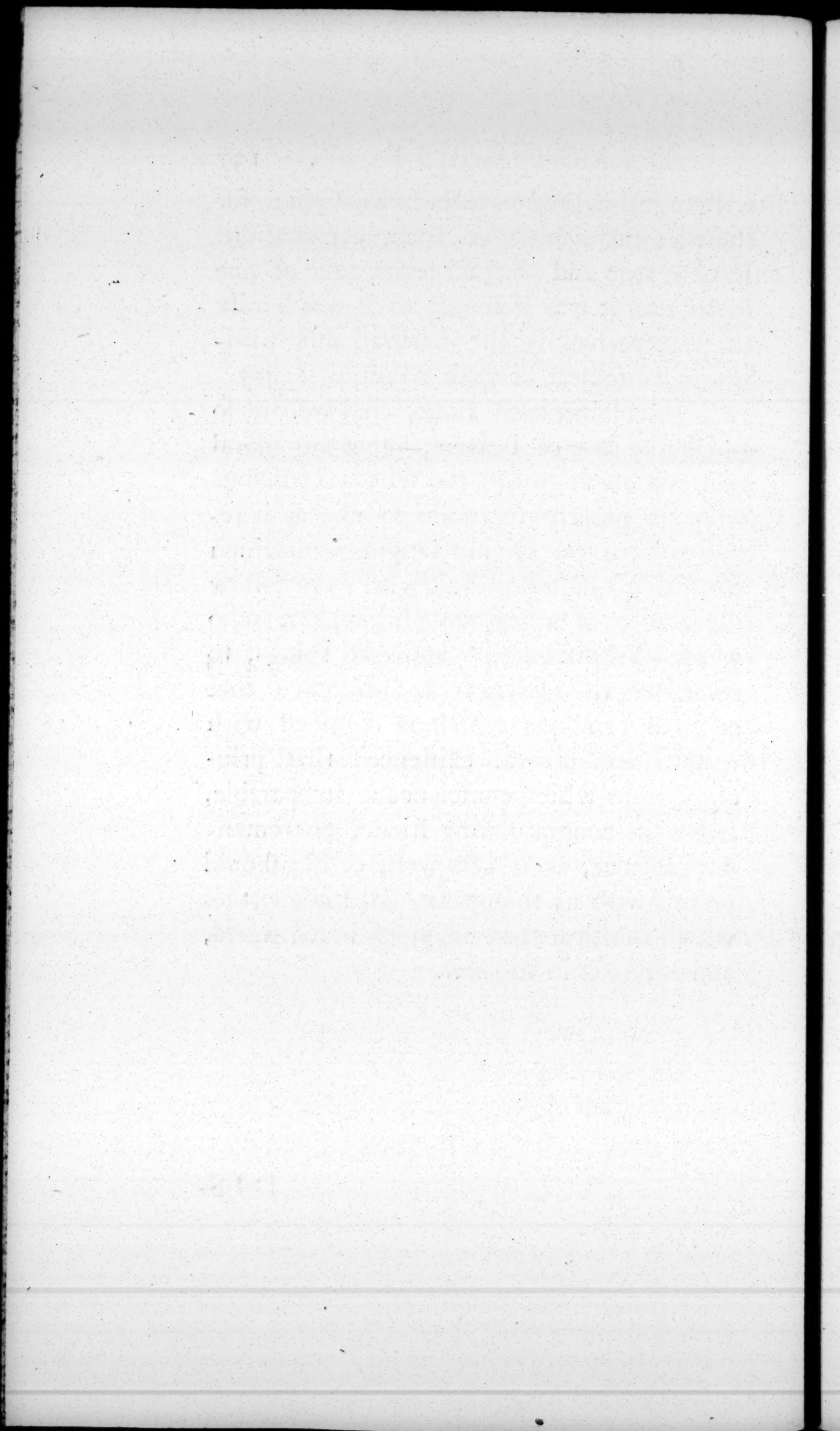
and conviction. Or, how little soever moral admonition may, in general avail, let me indulge the soothing prospect, that I shall, at least, make one man of this congregation a profelyte from vice to virtue. And while a minister of the best, of the purest, and sublimest morality, can hope that he may reclaim one fellow-creature from a bad to a good life, to such a life as Christianity enjoins; he hath sufficient encouragement to continue his exhortations with ardour, and assiduity. For we are assured by our Saviour himself—*That there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.*—[Luke ch. xv. ver. 7.]—and why? Because the angels in heaven rejoice in what is pleasing to God, and most beneficial to man; in seeing the prevalence of their creator's moral œconomy in this lower world—because the deviation of one individual from virtue, as it commonly precedes his ruin, is felt by those benevolent spirits, the servants of that paternal Being, *whose tender mercies are over all his works,*—[Psalm cxlv. ver. 9.]—and because they survey the habitual, and long-continued righteousness of ninety-nine just persons
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with a calm, and secure satisfaction; for there is no danger of their depravation. But the true and effectual repentance of one sinner, as it was dubious, as it was hardly to be expected, is the natural, and well-grounded subject of their triumph, or joy.

This consideration alone, that we are so much the care of heaven;—that our moral reformation augments the felicity of Beings who are greatly superiour to us; as it reminds us of the Divine Origin from which we spring, should prevail with us to follow the advice of a heathen philosopher, who warned his disciples, “above all things, to reverence themselves;” to reverence that ethereal principle which is dignified with reason, and eternal existence; that principle from which conscience is inseparable, and is its congratulating friend, or tremendous accuser, as it acts well, or ill; should prevail with us to cultivate all those virtues which constitute our happiness in *this* world, and ensure it in the *next*.

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DISCOURSE V.

In Defence of the CHURCH of ENGLAND
against the SECTARIES.

Je ne trouverai pas grace devant ceux qui s'imaginent qu'il est essentiel à la verité d'être dite froidement ; opinion que, pourtant, J'ai peine à comprendre. Lorsq'une vive persuasion nous anime, le moyen d'employer un langage glacé ? Quand Archimede, tout transporté, couroit nud dans les Rues de Syracuse, en avoit-il moins trouvé la verité parce qu'il se passionnoit pour elle ? Tout au contraire, celui qui la sent ne peut s'abstenir de l'adorer ; celui qui demeure froid ne l'a pas vue.

ROUSSEAU : Avertissement sur les
Lettres ecrites de la Montagne.

DISCOURSE V.

PSALM XCVI. ver. 9.

—Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

AN honest, and sensible explainer of scripture goes not out of his way to find a remote, or obscure meaning for a word, or a passage; but gives it, in every practicable instance, the natural, obvious, and complete interpretation that similar expressions, and propositions convey. Two sorts of men have, in all the ages of christianity, made false, and dangerous comments on those parts of the christian code which comprehend evangelical morals, and on those parts which relate to discipline, and church-government:—They who are so weak as to imagine that singularity is ingenuity; and who are so inconsiderate as to exercise their puerile ingenuity on subjects which are sacred, and which, therefore, should be inviolable;—and they who industriously torture, and deform fact, and truth,

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to obtain, and secure the objects of their interest, and ambition.

As I declare myself, in this discourse, a warm, but I hope a fair, and unprejudiced advocate for the church of England, against every sect in the kingdom, I shall cautiously avoid the affectation, and criminality of those whom I have censured.

Therefore to the phrase in the text, the beauty of holiness, with which we are commanded to worship God, I shall apply its easy, but comprehensive signification. I apprehend that it refers principally to publick religious worship; that it enjoins us to address our Creator with an humble, attentive, and fervent mind; and that it likewise implies that the ceremonies, and appendages of religion, should have a decorum, a significance, a dignity. For though it would be absurd, and impious to suppose that these ceremonies, and appendages in the least degree augment the glory, and happiness of God, we may not only suppose, but we are warranted to assert, from our experience of the human constitution, that they have a great, and good effect on the most enlightened worshippers of the Deity. Man is a compound being; he hath a body

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as well as a soul; he hath senses as well as intellect. By his senses are necessarily conveyed to his understanding those legible, and magnificent characters which demonstrate the being of a God;—the works of creation. And we might easily prove, that through our whole moral, and religious conduct, external objects, and our senses might be made greatly conducive to our vigorous improvement in virtue, and piety. Can any unprejudiced person deny that our bowing occasionally at the name of Jesus Christ; that the joining of the people with the priest, in our form of worship; that receiving the sacrament on our knees; that the chaste, yet striking decorations of our altar——can any unprejudiced person deny that ceremonies, and ornaments, thus prudently, and gravely instituted, greatly tend to keep the human mind in a proper frame, when it offers its petitions, and gratitude to its Creator?—that such concomitants of our internal acts of devotion guard us from indifference, and improper thoughts, and preserve our serious and earnest attention to the great objects on which we are employed? That these evident truths are strenuously denied, we well know. But they
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can only be denied by the spleen of the bigot, and by the frenzy of the enthusiast.

Such, unquestionably, is the nature of man, that he must not, in the general course of his life, pretend to a practice of virtue independent of externals, in the language of the stoics; or of carnal objects, and ordinances, in the jargon of the puritan. As he prays not to be led into temptation, he must not wantonly expose himself to temptation. As our minds are far more apt to take their durable form, their permanent character, from the outward objects with which we are conversant, than from the noble exertion of our own reason, let us attach ourselves to those objects with the utmost caution, and circumspection. Let us converse with the virtuous, and with men of a rational, and manly piety. Let us imitate, let us emulate bright examples. Let us diligently contemplate the beautiful, and the astonishing works of nature, from which our hearts, and minds rise to heaven;—and let us carefully avoid those despicable, but alluring works of art, that are expressly contrived to promote luxury, and vice; and that sink us below the animal creation. Let temperance preside over our health;

health; for bad health, among its other evils, weakens even virtue. Let us take pleasure, in its turn, and with discretion: the voice of nature calls us to pleasure; and all innocent gaiety, and pleasure are authorized by scripture, by the oracles of God. Pleasure, well-chosen, and moderately enjoyed, is a necessary relaxation to man, from serious, and important objects, on which his mind, cannot, to its improvement, be long employed. Such pleasure is essential to his happiness; and therefore it invigorates the favourite virtue of the christian system, active benevolence. For the more satisfied, the happier we are in ourselves, the more we are disposed to promote the happiness of others.

This amiable, this evangelical theory, the four, and rigid sectary will not hesitate to pronounce impiety. But it is *he* who is impious, by entertaining gloomy, and dreadful ideas of God, which are abhorrent from his paternal, and merciful nature. He represents him, not as he is displayed in the structure of the universe, and in revelation, a most provident and benign father; not as the God whose *service is perfect freedom*; but as the inflexible tyrant of misera-

ble slaves. With that inconsistency which prevails in all his doctrine, and belief, he presumptuously anticipates his salvation; yet he thinks it is insured by the most pusillanimous, abject, and dastardly conduct;—by a reserved, and morose temper; by abstaining from those exhilarating, and noble pleasures, for which, in some measure, we were formed; by restraining the social smile; by refusing the least office of humanity to a worthy man, who differs from him in religious opinion. He makes his God a Moloch; a dæmon by whom he is to be saved; *but so as by fire.*

What I have been now advancing, will not, I flatter myself, be altogether deemed a digression. For I have been enumerating the principal moral characteristics of a christian, which make a considerable part of the beauty of holiness: and as I have, at the same time shown, that all our education, all our habits are intimately connected with externals, I have not been wandering from the subject which was under my immediate consideration. For hence it will follow, that religious externals; that the temperate solemnity of rites, and ceremonies; that the majestick fabrick of a church,
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and its corresponding ornaments, will have a very forcible influence in keeping our minds attentive, and elevated, during the celebration of publick worship. This truth I now propose more directly to illustrate.

Can we suppose that a person of any observation, sentiment, and reflexion, would be so apt to receive grave, and sublime impressions; to look from nature, up to the God of nature, in a mean, and gloomy apartment, that afforded no grand, or agreeable prospect; as if he walked, in a calm, and serene evening, through a venerable grove; and surveyed, over his head, the azure sky, the moon, in her mild, yet awful majesty; and the bright host of stars; that stupendous infinity of suns? and may I not ask, with a fair analogy, whether a sensible mind, totally unprejudiced in matters of religion, will more probably maintain a strong, and manly spirit of piety, in a kirk, or meeting, where the architecture is vulgar, and wretched; where melancholy, and sour looks are the only external marks of the congregation's worship;—and where an unknown, a tedious, an unconnected, and often blasphemous rhapsody, called a prayer, is the object of their stupid curiosity, not of their

concomitant, and fervid assent;—whether will an ingenuous mind be more powerfully assisted in its religious duties in such a place, and in such an assembly;—or in one of our august cathedrals; where our simple, yet moving, and sublime liturgy, is performed with all the advantages of decent, and respectable habit, moderate, yet affecting ceremony, sedate, solemn, and pathetick music?—Let natural sentiment, let reason, let experience, decide the question: for prejudice, and bigotry never yet spoke truth.

Where ignorance, and a virulent enthusiasm prevail, and where an extreme is to be avoided, men are sure to substitute one extreme for another. The reformers of the church of England, with prudence, candour, and a rational zeal, corrected the errors of the church of Rome, supplied its defects, and retrenched its gross, and dangerous superfluities. Knox, and his banditti (for if you saw the havock they made in Scotland, you would not think they deserved a better name) thought there could be no reformation without extirpation. — They pulled down; they burned; they destroyed. The Deity had been adored by the papists in magnificent temples; a circumstance, which,

which, in itself, was certainly not so absurd, nor improper: therefore *they* insisted He should be worshiped in miserable sheds. In short, they abolished all decorum from religion; they extinguished all its genuine spirit, and life. Those theological empiricks, by their violent nostrums, reduced the body of the church, which was grown enormously corpulent, and unwieldy, to a dry, and shocking skeleton.

If I even had time, it is not my business here, to enter into a minute discussion of the disputes between us, and the dissenters. It was only my intention to give you the great out-lines of our disputes, and differences; not to promote, or excite in your minds, an unchristian antipathy against *any* dissenters;—for there may be good, and great men of every persuasion; and moderation, humanity, universal and active benevolence, not a zeal for the church of England, constitutes the truly good, and great man;—but that you may be tenacious of an honour which has been dear to every worthy citizen of all ages, and states; that you may congratulate yourselves on adhering to the form of religion established in your country; a form, which, from its pro-

priety, and dignity, more than any other, inculcates, and invigorates the practice of christian morals; and therefore best answers the great end of religious institutions.

I must, however, beg leave to take notice of one striking absurdity in the pulick worship of our dissenting brethren; an absurdity which remarkably shows the force of prejudice on the human mind; that it not only misleads people of common sense, in the simplest questions; but that in such questions it may baffle men of excellent understandings.

The dissenters exclude from their petitions to heaven, that short, comprehensive, admirable, and truly divine prayer which was produced by the mind of the Son of God himself; and which, by commanding his apostles, and the other first christians to use, he commanded to be used by all christians of all ages. At the reformation we judiciously, as well as piously retained it: and by its frequent occurrence in our liturgy, it has been often objected to us, with more clamour than consideration, that, in this instance, we palpably violate our Saviour's caution, not to *use vain repetitions*. That it should always be used, both in publick,

lick, and private worship, I am warranted by our Saviour's plain, and full injunction, to assert ;—that it would not be improper to use it even but once, I am not bigot enough to deny. But I strenuously deny that its frequent repetitions, in the church of England, are vain repetitions ; if they are made with an attentive, sincere, and fervent mind. For let us recollect the substance of this inimitable prayer. Never was any thing written, at the same time so concise, and full ; that inculcated with such perspicuity, and force, and in so small a compass, our moral, and religious obligations. In *it* we invoke the omnipotent Creator ; the Protector, the paternal Ruler of the universe. In *it* we condemn, and therefore by *it* we should extinguish our extravagant, and pernicious desires ; for we request only the necessaries of life ; which, if we take the whole tenour of life, and the general conduct of mankind into our view, we shall find most conducive to health, and happiness. What could contribute more to actuate the minds of individuals with the amiable, and godlike spirit of christianity, to diffuse it through a whole community, than this prayer, if it was universally adopted, with an honest, and sin-

cere heart? For in *it* we implore the lenity, and mercy of God, only in proportion as we are mild, and forgiving to our neighbour: and we pray that the will of God may be done on earth, that the kingdom of Christ may prevail among us;—*i. e.* that we may be temperate, industrious, honest, candid, generous; that our lives may be devoted to the true, and permanent happiness of ourselves, and others.

Now will any impartial man, who is acquainted with human nature, insist, that there is vain repetition, that there is *any* impropriety in the frequent use of this prayer, during the service of our church?—I cannot believe he *will*. It can only be condemned by those whose religious opinions have been formed, and riveted by prejudice; and by those who have never thought, and therefore have never embraced any solid, or sensible religion; who frequent publick worship merely because it is frequented by others, and to show their better cloaths; and who come to church with a wish to get out of it as soon as possible. Unfortunately for *them*, fair argument is lost on either of these classes: the minds of the *one* are blinded; those of the *other* never saw.

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I have more to add hereafter in defence of our sacred community; for to reason long at a time, on any subject, is, in general, to be tedious.

I am a very unfashionable, and I fear I may be thought by some, an ill-natured preacher, for thus directly comparing our mode of worship with that of the dissenters, and giving the superlative preference to the former. It may be said that I am renewing old disputes, and animosities. But when a man's conscience tells him he is doing his duty, he can bear censure; though the censure of a good man, would in *any* case, give *me* pain. A clergyman is, at this time, warranted to step forth as an express advocate for the whole system of our church, against inflexible, and artful opposition, by the conduct of the dissenters in the present reign, who have been long endeavouring (for they are noted for perseverance) to remove those legal, and necessary barriers which guard us from hostile invasion;—with an obvious view to destroy the constitution of the church of England. If teachers of all denominations are to inculcate, and propagate whatever doctrines they please, of what use is a religious establishment?

ment? Can its proper dignity be maintained; can it be safe; can it long exist? If a religious establishment should be preserved, what can the sects desire more than what they have long enjoyed, a limited, and determined, yet a humane, and ample toleration? If we comply with their demands (for they rather demand than petition) we shall be criminal for our want of an honest, and laudable zeal for the church; and we shall be contemptible, and ridiculous for our want of policy.

I likewise intend, on the first opportunity, to take a view of the characters of those illiterate, and selfish men, who arrogate *our* profession; and though the vulgar, and blasphemous rhapsodies which they give you for sermons, are void of *method*, connexion, and sense, call themselves *methodists*. Some observations on *them* will perhaps be necessary to keep you steady churchmen; as I find they greatly infest this neighbourhood.

From all that I have said, and from all that I intend to say on this important subject, I beg you may draw the just conclusion, for your sake, and for my own. I only mean to guard you against all spiritual

DISCOURSE V. 155

tual seduction; to convince you of the excellence of the church in which you have been bred; and to persuade you to worship God in that church, through life, regularly, and uniformly, with sincerity, attention, and fervour; and you will then worship him in the beauty of holiness. I am so far from insinuating that you should harbour the least ill-will against dissenters of any denomination, that as I have the honour to be an interpreter of the celestial morality of Christ, I may safely venture to pronounce it our duty, not only to live as peaceably as we can with all men; but wherever distress calls for our assistance, to do all the good offices in our power, to a Jew, a Turk, or an Infidel. To suppose that any homage we can pay to the supreme Being is acceptable to Him for his own sake, is the height of impiety. He commands us to pay Him private, and publick homage for our own sakes; that we may abound in those virtues which make us happy here; and which ensure our happiness in a better, and eternal world:—but above all, that we may deem the whole human species, brethren; and that we may practice, to our utmost abilities, in it's unlimited

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mitted signification, and force, universal benevolence. And to give deep impressions of manly virtue, and piety; and consequently to promote the practice of all christian morality, and especially the love of mankind; of all churches in the world, I recommend that church, for which the most learned, and brightest men have written, and for which the best, and bravest men have bled, the Church of England.—Which Church, however it is neglected, and despised by the thoughtless, and the licentious, in this trifling and profligate age, I hope God will preserve from all the machinations of its enemies.

D I S-

DISCOURSE VI.

In Defence of the CHURCH of ENGLAND
against the SECTARIES.

DISCOGRAPHY

DISCOGRAPHY

DISCOGRAPHY

DISCOGRAPHY

DISCOURSE VI.

PSALM XCVI. ver. 9.

—Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

IN my former discourse on this text I vindicated (and I flatter myself, though with warmth, yet not with an intolerant, and persecuting spirit) the worship, and government of the church of England, from the objections, and invasions of its enemies. And I hope I showed you, by familiar examples, that *our* form of worship, as human nature is affected by outward objects, is better calculated than any other, to warm our minds with a true, manly piety, and consequently to favour our progress in moral, practical improvement. I shall now endeavour to do no more than justice to the characters of our established clergy, as men of learning, as moral agents, and as preachers of the gospel, when compared with the spiritual guides of our sects. For certainly the excellent endowments, and manners of
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a clergyman make a very considerable part of that beauty of holiness over which he presides; and greatly contribute to diffuse it through the morals, and piety of his hearers. I hope all that I shall say of the methodists, when it is connectedly considered, will show that I have no personal, and unchristian antipathy against them: but I should think myself a too cautious, a pusillanimous advocate in the cause of genuine religion, if I should not, in warning you against their influence, use that plain, and explicit language which their presumption, their art, or at best their frenzy deserves. I think that * few Englishmen, of a liberal mind, will in any way dissent from

* If I did not except from the prejudiced, or precipitate dissenters from the church of England, the Reverend Theophilus Lindsey, who resigned the living of Catterick in Yorkshire, I should do injustice to his learning, to his consummate integrity, to his exemplary virtue. I have heard his excellent practical doctrine, at his chapel in Essex-House, with pleasure; with emotion: because he felt himself, and practised what he taught. How tawdry, and weak is all the ingenuity of the mind; all the force and magnificence of oratory, when compared with one simple, genuine, and good sentiment, which the heart dictates; to which the heart vibrates; and which conduct ratifies!

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the church of England; provided their judgment is acute, and vigorous; and provided they give to our established worship, and to the pretensions of the sectaries, a fair examination, and comparison. But as for these methodists, they are such absolute spiritual quacks, and so exactly resemble, from the shocks they give to the soul, those desperate itinerants who make unmerciful experiments on the body, that they deserve a particular, and severe animadversion; and are a capital bane of society.

When the christian religion was first recommended, and inculcated to mankind, evident, and palpable proofs that it came immediately from God, were indispensably necessary, to give it proper authority, and extensive influence. Hence the apostles were endowed with our Saviour's prophetic spirit, and with his extraordinary power, which wrought many miracles. But when evangelical truth was sufficiently authenticated, and had gained a firm footing in many countries, the striking, and irresistible interposition of the Deity for its propagation, was naturally to cease, in the wise œconomy of heaven. The government of God is too uniform, and beautiful, to produce effects

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by superfluous causes. He, who penetrates infinite space, and time, foresaw that the facts related in the New Testament would be as well attested as any other great events of which we entertain not the least doubt; and therefore, that they would be entitled to the credit of every unprejudiced, reasonable, and attentive mind. He likewise foresaw with what a powerful eloquence the excellent precepts of revelation would speak to the genuine sentiments of the human heart. Thus he left to modern ages the merit of a happy disposition to examine, and adopt the purest code of ethicks; the merit of a rational, and moral belief.

But the methodists pervert, as much as they can, the order of providence, in the propagation of his religion; and unseasonably, and impiously claim such knowledge, and powers, as were only granted in the first age of christianity. If we believe what they tell us, we must conclude that they hold intimate converse with the Deity. They *deal* salvation, and *damnation* round the land, with express, and personal application. With a bolder degree of privilege (if there can be one) they renew the age of miracles; they heal all kinds of diseases;

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and in some tremendous visitation, they inflict the punishment of heaven on those who reject, or despise their pretended mission. Do I seem uncharitably to aggravate their absurdity, and presumption? Read Wesley's Journal; and if you knew not the imposture, you might suppose you read a sequel of the acts of the apostles. To inculcate our domestick, social, and civil duties (which is the end of all true religion) they totally omit. Instead of explaining, and enforcing scripture as the guide of life, they exert all their miserable ingenuity to make the whole an inconsistent, and uninteresting allegory. The divine authour of our faith intended it for a vital, and active principle in man; while they endeavour to degrade it to a still, speculative, and mystical object. Instead of promoting the prosperity of families, to which I am sure piety rightly understood has a direct, and effectual tendency, they impoverish their deluded proselytes, by raising, or stealing contributions upon them, and by perswading them to waste that precious time on *their* cant, and jargon, in which they should earn a provision for those whom it is their indispensable duty to support. Instead of exhibiting to them a salu-

tary view of the supreme Being, and of themselves, which would induce them to proceed calmly, and steddily, in the path of life assigned them, with a lively, yet modest hope, and trust in God, they incapacitate them from acting their parts as citizens of this world, and candidates for a better, by giving a fatal impulse to a melancholy, or a sanguine temper; by emboldening their confidence, or sinking their despondency. Thus they strongly resemble the church of Rome in the worst characteristicks of that rapacious, and ambitious hierarchy, against which they often exclaim with an ignorant vociferation. I must not here forget to remark the mean, the irreverent, the blasphemous images, and terms, by which they represent the Deity; terms that would not only shock a polite, but even the most untutored ear.

There is in men of every rank, and education—there is in human nature, an ardent curiosity, and love of novelty. This passion, when judiciously directed, and restrained, is a very natural, and a noble property of the active, the excursive, and the inextinguishable mind of man. This propensity is not always governed by reason, even in those who have had the best opportunities of intellectual

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telleetual improvement. But in illiterate minds it is often most inordinate, and extravagant. They are apt to prefer new, and prejudicial falsehood, to old, and useful truth: nay they are apt to be most captivated with what they do not understand. Thus, if a conscientious, and well-instructed minister of our church inculcates, and displays the good effects of temperance, honesty, and industry (and in my humble opinion he cannot be better employed) the chimerical people of whom I am speaking, despise him as a dull preacher, and abhor him as a recommender of *carnal ordinances*;—but if one of their own unlettered, and impudent declaimers mounts his rostrum, and pours upon them such incoherent stuff as never issued from the tongue of man; if he brings them unintelligible lies from hell, and tells them unintelligible lies about heaven; all is admiration, sighs, and tears, and devout ecstasy.—*He is a charming man; a most edifying preacher*; and, to complete the profane encomium, *a preacher of the Gospel*.

The only matter, and style of which these rhapsodists are capable, are, fortunately for them, but too well adapted to the genius of their congregations; in whom imagination,

and extravagant thought have always had far more play, than intellect; and generosity of sentiment; who are more readily attracted by unwarranted promises, and denunciations, by wild ardour, and empty sound, than by a clear appeal to their uncultivated reason, and an easy address to their common feelings; a strain in which their orators have not sense enough to continue for a minute. But they need not have recourse either to sense, or sentiment; they have only to speak whatever first arises, with uninterrupted volubility, and in a peremptory tone; they have only to give their harangue an air of importance, with profuse, and incongruous quotations of holy texts: and they must, at proper, and artful intervals, enforce their jumble of words, and ideas, with the disorder, and frenzy of the Sibyl in the poet.

Those parts of scripture which enounce the pure worship of God, and prescribe our moral conduct, are not obscure. But I must beg leave to observe, that to explain them regularly, to give them their full signification, and force; to set them in a beautiful, and striking light, demands that store of knowledge, that habitude to study, and composition,

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position, which ought to be diligently acquired by every clergyman. To collect the scattered rays of *the sun of righteousness*; to digest the practical parts of the new testament into a well-connected, and perspicuous moral system; to determine, or illustrate the meaning of one text by the proper citation of another, as its comment; to illumine, and adorn the sacred oracles with reason, and learning, their natural auxiliaries, and friends; to defend the christian religion from the artful, and specious attacks of its formidable enemies; to be thus useful; to do this noble service to society, requires that liberal, and extensive education, which I may, without partiality, assert, is the happy privilege of the English clergy, more than of any other ministers in Europe.

My description of the methodists as teachers of religion, is not, I believe, at all hyperbolical; and the consequences of their doctrine, on the minds of men, are such as might be expected from the picture I have now exhibited; and they are well known over England. Those of their hearers, who are of a gloomy habit of mind, take the horrible threats which are thundered in their ears, to themselves; are driven to despair,

and often terminate their despair by suicide. They who are of a sanguine, and lively constitution, interpret the confidential, and bright promises which they hear, in their own favour; are soon assured that their salvation is irrevocably ratified in heaven; and consequently grow negligent of their moral conduct. And indeed what check remains to prevent them from living as if there was neither a God, nor a future state? For low minds are but little impressed by the use, and advantages of virtue; and yet less by its beauty. These unhappy men, in general, neglect the business of their stations; they are absorbed in the dark severity of superstition; or dissipated in the flights of enthusiasm. Hence proceeds the indigence of their families; and hence follow great prejudices to the community. They entertain a most inveterate antipathy against all who are not within the pale of their worship, and include them in a state of damnation. This is another most unchristian, and papal characteristick.

I doubt not but some of the methodistical teachers have assumed their illegal, and dangerous profession, without any secular views; from the mere enthusiasm with which they
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afterwards inspired their followers. I am sorry to observe, that a very few instances might be produced of established clergymen, who, not from any motives of interest, but from a fever of the soul, have quitted the rational divinity that should always be preached in *our* pulpits; and have espoused the tenets, or rather the visions of the methodists. Men of good parts, and cultivated minds will embrace, defend, *create* the greatest absurdities, by extravagantly indulging a warm, and luxuriant imagination. Learned doctors of different churches have got intimately acquainted (they best know how) with the garden of Eden, and with the invisible world: they have informed us, with great minuteness, and precision, of the corporeal, and mental state of our first parents, before the fall; and they have told us, with equal accuracy, what the angels were doing in heaven, and what the devils were doing in hell.

But I am certain that I do not offend against the golden law of charity when I assert, that most of those who strike into this devious, and wild road—I mean that most of the methodists who pretend to preach, usurp the sacerdotal office to obtain that ease,

ease, and affluence which are not afforded them by their occupations. Sometimes from weakness we entertain, and sometimes from hypocrisy we affect, an excess of charity, which is only its abuse, or folly. But when we are investigating important truth, let us not be afraid to look human nature boldly in the face; and we shall find it selfish, obdurate, rapacious. We shall find that the vulgar, that is, the generality, of mankind; those who are destitute of enlarged understanding, and exalted sentiment, are great adepts in that mean art, that despicable cunning which promotes interest, and which is unnatural to the few liberal, and expanded minds. We shall likewise find that the * ignoble, as well as the noble enthusiasm, is a rare property in the human constitution; so provident is its Authour for the peace, and regular progress of society. From these premises we may safely infer, that profit, not the salvation of souls, is the leading object of the spiritual instructors of

* If by this observation I seem to contradict myself, I further observe, that the religious extravagance of the methodists, and other visionaries, is, in general, a caught, a fancied, an imitative, not a real, and ardent enthusiasm. They are seduced, and deceived; or they are hypocrites; but they are not enthusiasts,

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the methodists. One of these political men, by exchanging honest industry for pious fraud, gains more emolument with less trouble. When he works in his calling, labour, and perseverance are payed with a pittance. But all that is required of him in his fictitious capacity, is, to talk nonsense fluently; which advantageous endowment is attained by the common properties of assurance, and easy articulation. These talents, the exertion of which is by no means painful, make him not only the spiritual, but likewise the temporal master of his hearers. Into the house of whatever saint he goes, he commands his purse, and his good cheer; and finds himself as much at home, as a pampered chaplain in a family of bigoted roman catholicks.

Is it not then incumbent on those, whose particular office it is to promote, and defend religion, to warn you against the wicked arts of these insidious men, these men of *corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth*; who are not actuated by *godliness*, but by the love of *gain*; [1 Tim. c. vi. v. 5.] and who, by *devouring widows houses, and, for a pretence, making long prayers*, will undoubtedly receive *the greater condemnation*? [Mat. c. xvi. v. 14.]

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Do not they deserve ecclesiastical, and civil animadversion, censure, and restriction? —I should hate myself, if I felt in my mind a particle of the inquisitorial spirit. If I had the power of an emperour, I would not hurt a hair of the man's head who dissented from me in matters of religion. But I earnestly wish, for the peace, and prosperity of the church, and state, that a temperate, and judicious exertion of some of our penal laws, against which a virulent, and ungrateful clamour hath of late been raised, because they were dormant, might oblige the presbyterians to desist from their obstinate, and arrogant claims, which they call petitions; and the methodists, to relinquish the mechanical operation of the spirit, for the mechanical operation of their trades.

I hope I have not said more than was necessary, and true, concerning the methodists, those deluded, and deluding people. And I likewise hope that I shall never again feel it my duty to give such particular attention to so mean a subject. Before I close this discourse, I have something to say in behalf of our church, against the presbyterians; our natural, inveterate, and I am sorry to add, our formidable enemies.

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Churchmen are proverbially stigmatized with pride, and ambition, or an inordinate love of power. Now, they, who make an impartial inquiry into human nature, will find, that great numbers of men of every profession are proud; and that still More, for many obvious reasons, are very fond of power. The fault originates from the human constitution; and from the various, and complicated effects of our civil, and social connexions; not from any particular class of men. I verily believe that persons of the sacred order, of every denomination, have, in the darker ages, been more notorious for pride, and ambition, than people in any other sphere; an excess which resulted from the nature of their office. They were deemed immediate ambassadors from heaven; from the king of kings, and lord of lords; the heralds of his will; the ministers of his vengeance, and the dispensers of his peculiar favours. This idea brought them a profound veneration, a kind of worship from the laity; and it stimulated their own self-love to arrogate, and obtain an enormous power, which I hope no fraternity will again enjoy. We are fortunate by living in a polished, and enlightened age,

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in which we find this unreasonable degree of spiritual dominion sufficiently retrenched, and circumscribed. We now see but in a few sons of the church, the disgusting remains of sacerdotal gloom; a suspicious reserve; a jealousy of the power which they yet retain; and a regret that they have not more.

The church of England has been more accused of this love of power than the dissenters, merely from a confusion of ideas, which always makes us reason wrong. The worship of our sanctuaries is performed with a decent, regular, and striking form; and it is raised with a proper style of ornament, and magnificence. The service of the dissenters is cold, slovenly, sleepy. Now, it is with societies as with individuals; they are apt to envy, and arraign the graces, and splendour which they do not possess; they are apt to pronounce them the emblems, and concomitants of pride. Of individuals I shall assert that a thread-bare coat is not contemptible, nor one of embroidery respectable; and that the Cynick, Diogenes, in his rags, and in his tub, was prouder;—more acrimoniously, and abominably proud, than the conqueror of the world, with all his ensigns of majesty.

jeſty. Of ſocieties, the Britiſh hiſtory will warrant me to aſſert, that the preſbyterians, notwithstanding their hypocritical pretences to a ſimplicity of doctrine, and manners; to a detachment from the pomps, and vanities of this wicked world, are always, in proportion to their power, more obſtinate, intolerant, and perſecuting than the church of England.

This remark, I believe, holds good, from old Henderſon, with whom Charles the Firſt was weak enough to maintain theological diſputes, down to modern Prieſtley, with whom it is beneath any ſenſible Subject to diſpute. I ſingle *Him* out from among his brethren; not becauſe I have any perſonal reſentment againſt the man, which it is every way impoſſible for me to feel; but to enforce my preſent argument, which is of conſequence to our eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment. I ſingle *Him* out, who is the moſt vehement, and ſupercilious advocate of the diſſenting petitioners; who is a moſt affiduous, though not a courtly client of the great; and who in the ſilent, and ſequeſtered cloſet, where reaſon, and philoſophy have the beſt opportunity to collect, and fortify themſelves; and for abſtracted objects, in
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which the passions are naturally least concerned; inveighs, with the most opprobrious language, against those who reject his crude, metaphysical novelties, which he never can ascertain; and which, if they were important enough to alarm, would be extremely mortifying to religion, and mankind. If he can be thus exasperated in disquisitions unaffecting, ærial, and undeterminable; on subjects of *mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain*; how intolerant must he be, when he is engaged in a contest of interest, or ambition? From these lineaments of his character I infer, that he wrote not his late polemical tracts from a tender conscience; from a love of pure, and simple religion; and from a sincere, and earnest opposition to the government of our church; not so much to obtain that relief which he demanded, as to inflict that oppression of which he complained; and that if it had been his fortune to be a pope (for it might have been his fortune, not his crime *) he

* I once heard Dr. Priestley preach at Mr. Lindsey's chapel in Essex-House. The substance of his sermon exhibited the moral deformity of acrimony, pride, and tyranny; and recommended universal mildness, benevolence, and good offices. All clergymen, and spiritual
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would have been as great a tyrant as a Sixtus, or an Alexander.

When a man compares the general morals of two large classes, he should make the comparison concisely, and modestly ; with a proper sense of his own imperfections, and faults. If we estimate fairly, and accurately, the dispositions, the habits, and the conduct of any two numerous bodies of men, I imagine we shall find that, on the whole, the one is not better than the other. If, in the opinion of many, the dissenters excell the clergy in humility, temperance, a universal government of the passions, and a contempt of externals ; the opinion is not formed on the substance, but on the semblance of practical philosophy. It is deduced from the situation of the presbyterians ; from their great caution ; from their consummate art

teachers have their failings ; most of them have their faults ; and many, their vices as well as other men. I wish that some of these gentlemen, for the sake of decency, would not be so absurdly fond, as they often are, of declaiming against those vices, or faults, to which they themselves are addicted. It rather exercises christian patience to hear a notorious *high priest* arraign pride, and inculcate humility.

Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes ?

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in saving appearances. But a moderate gratification of the senses is not remarkable merit in any man who cannot purchase luxury; and though caution, and appearances have good stage-effects in the drama of human life, yet appearances are not virtues: and though caution is a necessary, and a very useful one, it so often makes a part of the most contemptible characters, that I acknowledge them our superiours in that virtue, without much regret.

The duke of Lauderdale, one day, requested of Charles the Second, some royal favour for the Kirk of Scotland. The king was not in a good humour; and replied, with his usual oath, that “his religion was not fit for a gentleman.”—I neither mean, by citing this anecdote, to give Charles’s opinion any weight, as a religious casuist; nor that a religion should be framed, exactly to suit the taste of that common, and frivolous character which we call a gentleman. But it reminds us of a trite, yet important truth; that the most excellent qualities, and endowments, and the best, and noblest causes, are strongly recommended, and enforced by social, easy, liberal manners. The very picture of humanity, that godlike virtue,
 charms,

charms, and captivates ; and is not politeness, considered in itself, a very engaging, though an artificial, humanity? But no man is so well entitled as the good christian, to adopt urbanity ; he may adopt it conscientiously :—in him it will be “ the outward, “ and visible sign, of an inward, and spiritual “ grace ;” it will express, and adorn his genuine sentiments. And by him it is, in general, acquired with facility ; for a well-modelled, a gentle, and benevolent mind, must easily coalesce with propriety, and decorum of behaviour. The eminently virtuous, and pious Nelson was remarkably elegant in his dress, and manner ; to show that there is nothing austere, and rustick in christianity ; that she lays no absolute, and unreasonable restraint, on the fashionable, the beautiful, and the gay ; and thus to promote her influence by those objects, which, as long as human nature exists, will always have a very powerful attraction. I do not think our clergy are the best-bred people in the kingdom : but whether they, or the dissenting teachers are more agreeable, and amiable in their external manners ; and consequently, who are, in that respect, of more service to christianity, I

leave a polite, and impartial publick to determine.

On the articles of learning, and abilities I need not be prolix. The literary annals of Britain will attest, that in *them*, they are infinitely our inferiours. Indeed the ablest, and most judicious criticks have owned that our theological writers are not equalled in Europe for manly eloquence, and argument.

I have thus defended as fully, and forcibly as my moderate abilities, and information permitted me (not from the prejudices of a clergyman; but from the reason, and sentiments of a man) a most excellent church, against a dangerous invasion; a church, whose doctrines, and ceremonies are in a happy medium between the glare of the papists, and the flatness of the puritans. If I am reproached by the latter with having drawn invidious, and odious comparisons, I reply, that they were not dictated by malignity; that, at this time, they are not odious, but just, and equitable; and that they were extorted from me by their *own* refractory turbulence; which demands not a timid, and lifeless apology; but an open, and spirited resistance. If some disputants, on subjects of the last importance, feel not,

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or suppress a generous ardour; and write with an excess of meekness, and complaisance (perhaps implicitly to reprove the warmth of their opponents, and to compliment their own invincible command of temper) when they ought to tell plain truths in plain language; as I deem this natural, or affected composure unworthy of a man, it is a species of prudence which I never shall imitate. Whether I have pleaded this momentous cause disinterestedly, and impartially, let the sensible, and candid reader decide. I hope the rulers of our church will guard her precincts with a watchful eye; and prevent the enemy from making any dangerous inroads on our sacred ground. The thunder of the methodists is *heard remote* by prelatic ears; it can only disturb, and alarm some conscientious, and diligent parish-priests; a circumstance which may probably be quite indifferent to our bishops. But let them look to themselves. The bolt of the dissenters is impending over their heads; and unless it is diverted, it may burst on each archiepiscopal palace. *To maintain the rights of the church, as established by law; to promote the diffusion of the christian religion; to urge whenever occasion offers, the*

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cause of humanity ; and *to prevent the wanton effusion of blood* ; for these salutary purposes alone, according to *my* humble view of policy, they possess, with propriety, a share in the legislature. And I ardently wish, that in the hour of trial, they may not as meanly desert *the first* of these great objects, as they have lately shrunk from *the last*.

F I N I S.



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